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SAINT ALBANS

ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH.

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF
SAINT ALBANS
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE FABRIC & A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ABBEY

BY THE

REV. THOMAS PERKINS, M.A.

RECTOR OF TURNWORTH, DORSET

AUTHOR OF "ROUEN," "AMIENS," "WIMBORNE AND CHRISTCHURCH," ETC., ETC.

WITH FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

THE Rev. W. D. Sweeting, who had originally undertaken to write this monograph on St. Albans, having been obliged, on account of ill-health, to abandon the work, the Publishers asked me to write it in his stead. My task was rendered much easier by Mr. Sweeting kindly sending me much material that he had collected, and many valuable notes that he had made, especially on the history of the Abbey.

My best thanks are due to the Dean for kindly allowing me permission to examine every part of the Cathedral church, and to take the photographs with which this book is illustrated. A few illustrations only are from other sources, among them those on pages 9 and 11, for permission to use which I have to thank Mr. John Murray. I have also to acknowledge the courtesy of the vergers, Mr. Newell and Miss Davis from both of whom I obtained much information; Miss Davis's long connection with the church, and the interest she takes in every detail connected with it, rendered her help most valuable. I have consulted many books on the Abbey, among them Lord Grimthorpe's and Mr. Page's Guides, Mr. James Neale's "Architectural Notes on St. Albans Abbey," and papers read before the St. Albans Archaeological Society by the Rev. Henry Fowler.

THOMAS PERKINS.

TURNWORTH.
July, 1903.

12-15

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ERRATUM.

In the Ground Plan the letter F denoting the Wallingford Screen should be at the east end of the Presbytery.

VIEW FROM THE NORTH-EAST BEFORE RESTORATION.

ST. ALBANS ABBEY, BEFORE 1874.

ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF THE BUILDING.

LONG before any church stood on the site of the present cathedral, long before the time of Albanus, who is universally allowed to have been the first Christian martyr whose blood was shed in this island, events that have found a place in the early history of Britain occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of the city we call St. Albans. Here in all probability stood the *oppidum* or stockaded stronghold of Cassivellaunus, who was chosen to lead the tribes of South-Eastern Britain when Julius Caesar in the year 54 B.C. made his second descent on the island. We all know the story, how the Britons gave Caesar so much trouble that, when at last Roman discipline had secured the victory, he, demanding tribute and receiving hostages as guarantees for its payment, left Britain and never cared to venture upon any fresh invasion. We know that the Trinobantes were the first to sue for peace, and, abandoning Cassivellaunus, left him to bear the brunt of Caesar's attack upon his stronghold, how this was destroyed by Caesar, and how Cassivellaunus also was obliged to make submission to the Romans.

Nearly a century passed before any Roman legionary again set foot on the British shores; but when at last, in the days of Claudius, A.D. 42, the Romans invaded the island, they came to conquer and occupy all except the northern part of Britain. In the early days of their occupation a walled town, which was soon raised to the rank of a *municipium*, was built on the south-western side of the Ver, and from the name of the river was called Verulamium or Verlamium. It soon became a populous place, for when in A.D. 61 Boadicea, the Queen of the Iceni, stung by the insults and injuries she and her daughters had received at the hands of the Romans, raised her own and the neighbouring tribes to take vengeance on their oppressors and

> Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies;
> Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary;
> Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, Camulodune.

It is recorded that no less than seventy thousand fell in these three places and the villages around them.

But her vengeance, sharp and sudden, was not allowed to pass unpunished by the Romans, and Suetonius Paulinus, hurrying from North Wales, though too late to save the three towns, utterly routed the forces of Boadicea somewhere between London and Colchester.

After this Verulamium became once more a prosperous town, inhabited partly by Romans, partly by Britons, who under Roman influence embraced the civilization and adopted the customs of their conquerors. By whom Christianity was first introduced into Britain we do not know; probably it was brought from Gaul. In the reign of Diocletian a great persecution of the Christians arose throughout the Roman empire. The edict enjoining this persecution was promulgated in February, 303 A.D., and the persecution lasted until the Emperor abdicated in May, 305 A.D. It was carried out in Britain by Maximianus Herculius and Asclepiodotus, and it was during this persecution that St. Alban won the martyr's crown. Though the story is embellished with certain miraculous incidents which most of us will reject as accretions of later ages, yet there seems no reason to doubt the main facts.

Albanus, or Alban, as we generally call him, was a young soldier and a heathen, but being a man of a pitiful heart, he gave

shelter to a certain deacon named Amphibalus, who was in danger of death. Amphibalus returned his kindness by teaching him the outlines of the Christian religion, which Alban accepted. When at last the persecutors had discovered the hiding-place of Amphibalus, Alban, in order to aid his escape, changed garments with the deacon, and allowed himself to be taken in his stead, while Amphibalus made his way into Wales, where, however, he was ultimately captured and was brought back by the persecutors, who possibly intended to put him to death at Verulamium, but for some reason which we do not understand he was executed about four miles from the city at a spot where the village of Redbourn now stands, the parish church of which is dedicated to him. Meanwhile Alban was charged with aiding and abetting the escape of a blasphemer of the Roman gods, and then and there declared that he too was a Christian. He was ordered to offer incense on the altar of one of the Roman gods, but refused, and as a consequence was condemned to be beheaded. The place chosen for his execution was a grassy hill on the further side of the river Ver. Great was the excitement among the inhabitants of Verulamium, for as yet they had seen no Christian put to death, and Alban was, moreover, a man of some mark in the place. So great was the crowd that it blocked the only bridge across the stream; but Alban did not desire to delay his death, so walked down to the river-bank. At once the waters opened before him, and he, the executioner, and the guards passed dry-shod to the opposite bank. This wonder so struck the executioner, that he, throwing down his sword, declared he would not behead Alban and also professed himself a Christian. When the band reached the hill Alban craved water to quench his thirst, for it was a hot summer day, June 22,[1] and at once a spring burst forth at his feet. One of the soldiers struck off the martyr's head, but his own eyes fell on the ground together with it; the executioner who had refused to do his duty was beheaded at the same time. These miracles are said to have so much impressed the judge that he ordered the persecution to cease. The traditional site of the martyrdom is covered by the north arm of the transept of the present church, and this site is

[1] It must be remembered that June 22 in the year 303 A.D. would be, as now, close to the longest day, as the alteration of the calendar known as the new style simply made the equinox occur on the same day of the month as in 325 A.D.

in accordance with Beda's account, which states that St. Alban was martyred about five hundred paces from the summit of the hill. When persecution had entirely ceased, a few years after Alban's death, a church was built over the spot hallowed by his blood. Beda, writing at the beginning of the eighth century, speaks of the original church as existing, and describes it as being a church of wonderful workmanship and worthy of the martrydom it commemorated. But in all probability the church standing in Beda's time was not the original one; this no doubt had been swept away during the time of the English invasion of Britain, when, as Matthew Paris tells us, the body of Alban was moved for safety from within the church to some other spot, whence it was afterwards brought back and replaced in the original grave.

That the spot was held in some reverence as early as the fifth century is proved by the conduct of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre. A synod was held at Verulamium in the year 429 A.D. to condemn the "Pelagian heresy" which had budded forth anew in the island, having had its origin in the teaching of the British monk Pelagius towards the end of the fourth century. Germanus and Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, attended this Council and refuted the followers of Pelagius. It is said that Germanus opened the coffin of the martyr and deposited in it some precious relics, receiving in return for them some relics from the coffin, and a piece of turf cut from the site of the martyrdom.

From this time we hear nothing for several centuries of the church or the neighbouring town of Verulamium, save that after the Teutonic conquest the town was known by the name of Werlamceaster, Watlingceaster, or Waetlingaceaster, the two latter names being derived from that of the Roman road, the Watling Street that runs through it. The site of the martyrdom also received a new name—Holmehurst or Derswold.

The next event recorded in connection with our subject is the founding of a Benedictine monastery by Offa II., King of the Mercians, about the year 793 A.D. He searched for and found the coffin that contained the martyr's bones. This, as already stated, had been removed from the original church dedicated to his memory, in order to save it from destruction at the hands of the Teutonic invaders, and had remained concealed, its very position forgotten, until it was miraculously revealed. The coffin was then opened; the martyr's body and the relics given by Germanus were found therein, and thus the identity of the re-

mains with those of Alban was established beyond doubt. Round the martyr's head Offa placed a golden circlet whereon were written the words: "Hoc est caput Sancti Albani." A reliquary richly decorated with precious stones was made to receive the body, and this was then deposited in the then existing church, which Offa repaired so that it might serve as a temporary resting-place until a grander church could be built. Offa had made a journey to Rome to get the Pope's consent to the foundation and endowment of the monastery.[1] At this time also Alban was canonized, so that henceforth he may be rightly spoken of as Saint Alban.

All that Offa seems to have been able to do besides repairing the church was to erect domestic buildings for his monks, who in course of time numbered a hundred. We have no record of any partial rebuilding, or enlargement even, of the church of Offa's day. From the fact that certain remains of it were incorporated in the present building, and that these were of the character generally called "Saxon," there is little doubt that the church of the monastery was not the little church erected in the fourth century over the martyr's grave, but one of later date, probably the one described by Beda as standing in his day, built in the latter part of the sixth or in the seventh century. We have no further record of this church, but we know that the ninth Abbot, Eadmer, began to collect materials for rebuilding the church; but the work was not begun until the time of the fourteenth Abbot, Paul of Caen, who was appointed by William I. So enthusiastically did he work, that in the short space of eleven years (1077-88) the church was rebuilt. The rapidity of the building was no doubt chiefly due to the fact that there was no need of hewing and squaring stone, for the Roman bricks from the ruins of the old city of Verulam were ready at hand, and the timber collected by Paul's five predecessors was well seasoned. It is said that the new church was not dedicated until the year 1115, but it is hard to believe that so long a space of time as

[1] A payment known as Peter's Pence had first been levied by the King of the West Saxons in 727, and was a tax of one penny on each family that owned lands producing thirty pence per annum; its object was the support of a Saxon College at Rome. Offa now induced the Pope to allow the pence so collected from his kingdom to be paid to the Abbey of St. Alban instead of the Saxon College at Rome. The payment was called Peter's Pence because it was paid on August 1st (the day dedicated to *St. Peter ad Vincula*), the day on which the relics of St. Alban had been discovered.

twenty-seven years would be allowed to elapse between the completion of the building and the dedication. It is possible there may be some error in this date.

We can form a good idea of this Norman church. It was like several of the other cathedral and abbey churches built at the same time, of vast size, far grander than their prototype in Normandy, St. Stephen's at Caen. The following table gives approximately the dimensions of some of these churches:

	Length of Nave.	Number of Bays.			Total Length.
		Nave.	Presbytery.	Apse.	
St. Stephen's, Caen	193	9	2	...	290
Canterbury ...	185	9	10	5	290
Winchester ..	318	14	3	5	...
St. Albans ...	275	13	4	...	460
Bury St. Edmund's	300	15	4	3	490

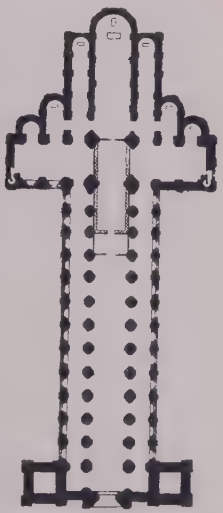
The church consisted of a nave with aisles; the arches of the main arcade were semicircular, the piers massive and rectangular; there were no mouldings, the orders of the arches, like the piers, having rectangular corners. There were possibly two western towers, which stood, like those of Rouen and Wells, outside the aisles on the north and south respectively, not at the western ends of the aisles (a far more common position), thus giving a much greater width and imposing appearance to the west front.

The existence of western towers of Norman date has been doubted by some antiquaries; some indeed imagine that John de Cella's thirteenth-century west front was built several bays further to the west than the Norman façade, and that the foundations of the unfinished towers were laid of old material by him. It is impossible to be absolutely certain on this point, but the argument sometimes brought forward that the nave was inordinately long for one of Norman date may be answered by mention of the fact that the Norman naves at Bury and Winchester were even longer, and that generally the Norman builders delighted in long structural naves, the eastern bays of which, however, were, together with the space beneath the towers, used for the choir or seats for the monks, the eastern part of the church beyond the crossing being generally occupied by the presbytery and the sanctuary where the high altar stood. In after times, however, considerable eastward extensions were made, as at Canterbury, and the monks' seats were then in many cases

moved eastward into the part of the church beyond the tower, the rood-screen being stretched across the church between the eastern piers that supported the tower.[1]

The transept had no aisles either on its eastern or western side; the eastern termination differed much from anything in existence now.

Mr. Prior in his "History of Gothic Art in England" tells us that two types of east end were to be found in the Anglo-Norman churches, both brought from the Continent, one the chevet prevalent in Northern France, the other derived originally from fourth and fifth century churches of the East, passing to Lombardy in the ninth century, and then along the Rhine and even reaching Normandy. Such was the original eastern termination of St. Stephen's, Caen; such may still be seen in St. Nicholas', Caen. This east end consisted of a number of parallel aisles, each with its own apse at its eastern end. "Norman use had squared the aisle endings of the choir two bays beyond the cross, the apse projecting its half circle beyond this, as at St. Etienne's, Caen, and in this form Lanfranc's Canterbury had been built."[2]



PLAN OF THE NORMAN CHURCH.

From Sir Gilbert Scott's Lectures. (By permission of Mr. John Murray.)

[1] The chief argument against the belief that western towers existed at St. Albans is that no documentary record of them is found. On the other hand it may be said that, whether the towers were built or not at the same time as the rest of the church, it is far more likely that John de Cella and William of Trumpington would have lengthened the church eastward than westward, when we find so many instances of eastward extensions during the thirteenth century, and of some before the twelfth century closed. The plan given in the text, assuming the existence of Norman towers, is that adopted by Sir Gilbert Scott, who had the opportunity of examining the foundations when restoring the church; his opinion was that the foundations were of Norman date. Of one thing we may be certain, that if finished western towers ever existed, they were of Norman date. For none were carried to completion by William of Trumpington.

[2] "Prior's "History of Gothic Art in England," p. 63.

In St. Albans this plan was further developed; from each arm of the transept two apses projected eastward, the outer ones consisting only of a semicircular projection from the transept, the inner ones of a rectangular bay from which the semicircular part ran eastward. The choir aisles, as we should now call them, consisted of four bays, beyond which they ended in a projection semicircular within, but rectangular when seen from the outside, the walls being thickened at the corners. These aisles were divided from the presbytery not by open arcading but by solid walls. The presbytery itself terminated in a semicircle projecting beyond the ends of the aisles. This extended as far as the centre of the present retro-choir.

Above the crossing rose the central tower, much as we see it to-day, save that it was probably crowned with a pyramidal cap rising from its outside walls. Probably also the tower as well as the rest of the church was covered with whitewashed plaster, thus hiding the material of which it was built—the Roman bricks of which mention has been already made. These bricks surpass in hardness and durability those of modern days, and are of different size and shape from those we are acquainted with. Those used in St. Albans are of two sizes, $17 \times 8 \times 2$ and $11 \times 5\frac{1}{2} \times 2$. The joints are wide, the mortar between the courses being almost as thick as the bricks. The window jambs and the piers were built or faced with brick; even the staircases were of brick. What stone was used is clunch, from Tottenhoe in Bedfordshire, which, according to Lord Grimthorpe, is admirably suited for interior work, but absolutely worthless for exterior, as it decays very soon, and if it gets damp is shivered into powder by frost.

The Norman church, finished as we have seen in 1088, stood without change for rather more than a century. Then changes began. Abbot John de Cella (1195-1214) pulled down the west front and began to build a new one in its place. He laid the foundation of the whole front, but then went on with the north side first. The north porch was nearly finished in his time; the central porch was carried up as far as the spring of the arch; the southern porch was carried hardly any way up from the foundations.[1] The porches are described by those who saw them

[1] Sir Gilbert Scott was of the opinion that the south porch was also John de Cella's work.

THE SOUTH-WESTERN PORTAL BEFORE THE REBUILDING OF THE WEST FRONT.

From a drawing by W. S. Weatherley, in Sir G. Scott's "Lectures on Mediaeval Architecture."

(By permission of Mr. John Murray.)

before Lord Grimthorpe swept away the whole west front as some of the choicest specimens of thirteenth-century work in England. The mouldings were of great delicacy, and were enriched with dog-tooth ornament. It is said that Abbot John was not a good man of business, and that he was sorely robbed and cheated by his builders, and so had not money enough to finish the work that he had planned. To his successor, William of Trumpington, it therefore fell to carry on the work. He was a man of a more practical character, though not equal to his predecessor in matters of taste. He finished the main part of the western front. Oddly enough no dog-tooth ornament was used in the central and southern porches, and the character of the carved foliage differs also from that of the north porch. In Abbot John's undoubted work the curling leaves overlap, and have strongly defined stems resembling the foliage of Lincoln choir, while that of Abbot William's time had the ordinary character of the Early English style. There is evidence to show that he intended to vault the church with a stone roof; this may be seen from the marble vaulting shafts on the north side of the nave between the arches of the main arcade, which, however, are not carried higher than the string-course below the triforium. The idea of a stone vault was, however, abandoned before the two eastern Early English bays on the south side were built, for no preparation for vaulting shafts exists there.

Abbot John de Cella had begun to build afresh the western towers, or, according to some authorities, to build the first western towers that the church ever had; we have no record of their completion, and it is said that Abbot William abandoned the idea. We have only the foundations by which we can determine their size. William of Trumpington transformed the windows of the aisles into Early English ones. He also added a wooden lantern to the tower, somewhat in the style of the wooden octagon on the central tower of Ely.

At some time, but we do not know exactly when, the Church or Chapel of St. Andrew adjoining the north nave aisle of the monks' church, extending as far east as the sixth bay, was built for the use of the parishioners, who had no right to enter the monastic church. This Church of St. Andrew opened into the north aisle of the Abbey Church, being separated from it by an arcade of four arches. It had a nave with aisle and chancel. Its total length was about 140 feet, its width about 61 feet. It

is conjectured that the north-western tower was converted into a kind of antechapel or entrance porch for the Church of St. Andrew. There was a door leading from the aisle of the Abbey Church into the chancel of St. Andrew's; this door, walled up, may still be seen in the fifth bay from the west end. In order to avoid the necessity of returning again to the history of this church, it may here be stated that it was rebuilt by John Wheathampstead after he had been re-elected to the office of Abbot in 1451; and that it was destroyed after the dissolution of the monastery, when there was no longer any need for it, as the parishioners bought the Abbey Church for parochial use. The place of the old arcading was then taken by a blank wall without any windows; this was pulled down and the present wall built by Lord Grimthorpe.

In the latter half of the thirteenth century the reconstruction of the eastern end was begun by Abbot John of Hertford. Here, as in many other churches, the Norman choir was too short for thirteenth-century requirements. The walls of the presbytery were raised and its high-pitched roof converted into a flat one. The church was gradually extended eastward by Abbots Roger of Norton and John of Berkhampstead; first the Saint's Chapel was built, then the retro-choir, and finally the Lady Chapel, which was finished by Abbot Hugh of Eversden in 1326.

Another change was necessitated by an event which took place on St. Paulinus' Day, October 10th, of the year 1323. For on that day a calamity such as had never before happened befell the church. The celebration of Mass at an altar of the Blessed Virgin was just over, a great multitude of people, men and women, still being in the church, when two of the Norman piers of the main arcade on the south side fell outwards one after the other with a great crash, and about the space of an hour afterwards the wooden roof of the nave which had been supported by these columns also fell; the piers themselves had crushed the south wall of the aisle and the cloisters, so that a complete wreck was made of the south-eastern part of the church westward of the tower. But this disaster was accompanied by a great marvel, for though many persons were standing close by, not one was injured; and a still more wonderful thing is recorded: the monk whose duty it was to guard the shrine of St. Amphibalus, which at that time stood in the nave, had been celebrating

at the altar—he had finished even to the washing of the sacred vessels—when he saw the columns fall; he withdrew a little from the altar and received no harm. Some of the wreckage fell on the shrine of St. Amphibalus, and though the marble pillars supporting the canopy were broken, yet the chest which contained his relics suffered no harm. This wonderful preservation of life and limb and shrine was naturally attributed to the intervention of the blessed martyr St. Amphibalus.

Abbot Hugh of Eversden began to rebuild this ruined part of the church, and this accounts for the five bays of the nave arcading westward of the rood-screen being in fourteenth-century style. He did not live to finish all this work, but it was carried on by his successor, Richard of Wallingford (1326-1335), and finished by the next Abbot, Michael of Mentmore, about 1345. The present rood-screen, which probably took the place of a previously existing one of Norman date, was built in 1360 by Thomas de la Mare. No further change of importance was made until the time of John of Wheathampstead, who was Abbot from 1420 to 1440, and again from 1451 to 1464. He left his marks in various parts of the Abbey, and for the most part his work was bad: he did almost as much to injure the Abbey as the nineteenth-century restorers who swept away much of his work have done. He rebuilt all the upper part of the west front, and inserted Perpendicular windows at each end of the transept; he turned the high-pitched roofs of nave and transepts into flat ones, and lowered the slope of the roofs of the aisles. His object in doing this was to be able to use the old beams again whose ends were decayed, and which were shortened by cutting off the unsound parts. The result of this was that the Norman triforium arches on the north side were thrown open to the sky; these he filled with Perpendicular tracery, converting them into windows. The tracery still remains, although the new roof has the same slope as the original one, and the triforium is now again inclosed beneath it. He also pulled down the wooden octagon on the central tower. His chantry on the south side of the high altar was probably erected soon after his death.

Abbot William of Wallingford (1476-1484) built the high altar screen, carrying out a plan which John of Wheathampstead had not been able to accomplish. The only addition made after this to the Abbey is the chantry of Thomas Ramryge, who became Abbot in 1492. The exact date of its construction is not known,

all records of the Abbey during Ramryge's rule having perished; but from its style it is generally supposed to have been built about the year 1520. During the reign of Henry VIII. all the monasteries were dissolved; first the smaller, then the more important ones, among them that of St. Albans. The fortieth and last Abbot of St. Albans, Richard Boreman of Stevenage,

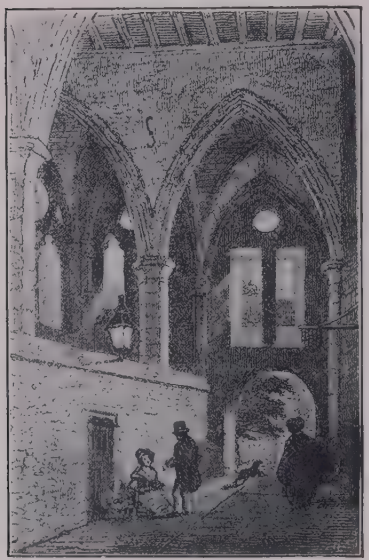
EXTERIOR OF LADY CHAPEL WHEN USED AS THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL BEFORE 1874.

(From the Official Guide to the Great Northern Railway.)

surrendered the Abbey on December 5th, 1539, he and the monks receiving pensions as compensation.

In February of the following year the King granted to Sir Richard Lee all the monastic buildings, but not the Abbey Church or the adjoining Chapel of St. Andrew, with all the land lying round the Abbey Church. Lee promptly proceeded to destroy all the domestic buildings. The church remained in the possession of the Crown till 1553, when the town obtained a charter from Edward VI. This, among other provisions, em-

powered it to erect a grammar school within the church or in some other convenient place. The town authorities thereupon converted the Lady Chapel and the retro-choir into the grammar school. A passage was cut through the retro-choir, bounded by brick walls on either side; this was used as a public pathway until 1874, when it was closed, and again became part of the church. The part to the east of the passage served as the grammar school until 1870. The mayor and burgesses by the same charter received the Abbey Church, in return for £400, to be used as their parish church; and in May, 1553, the first rector, George Wetherall, took charge of the building.



INTERIOR OF THE LADY CHAPEL BEFORE 1874.
(From the Official Guide to the Great Northern Railway.)

The parishioners thus found themselves in possession of an enormous building which they had not sufficient money to keep in proper repair. In 1612, and again in 1681, briefs or letters patent were issued by royal authority, ordering collections to be made in all churches in England for the repair of St. Albans Church. In 1689 a grant was made by William and Mary. These sums were spent on various repairs, such as altering the belfry windows, "filling up" with earth "the hollow in the wing," that is, raising the level of the floor of the south arm of the transept. In 1695 similar work was done in the north aisle; in 1704 a new window, a wooden one, was inserted in the south end of the transept, in place of Wheathampstead's, which had

been blown in by a gale during the previous year. There are records of £100 being spent in recasting some of the bells between 1705 and 1707.

Money was again collected in 1721 by letters patent, and this was spent on repairing the ceilings. About the same time a legacy was spent in repaving the nave, and the west ends of the aisles were blocked by brick walls. Some slight repairs were done about 1764, when a fresh collection was made.

More extensive repairs were made in 1832: the roof was releaded, such of the clerestory windows as had been closed were reglazed, and the south window of the transept was rebuilt in stone. The choir, after the repairs, was opened for service in 1833. The nave to the west of the rood-screen was more or less in a dilapidated condition, protected by the releaded roof, but not used. The presbytery had been fitted up in Georgian style as a chancel, the organ stood in the north arm of the transept, and high pews filled the choir westward as far as the rood-screen. This was the condition of the part of the church which was used up to 1870.

In 1856 a scheme was started for getting the Abbey Church raised to cathedral rank, and also for restoring the fabric. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Gilbert Scott was appointed architect, and was empowered to do what he thought most pressing as far as funds would allow; the flat roof of the north aisle was renewed, drainage attended to, and foundations strengthened; the floor at the south end of the transept was lowered—it will be remembered that it had been raised in 1692—the vaults were filled with concrete, and the floor repaved. The presbytery was repaved with tiles copied from some old ones. The Georgian fittings were removed to the nave; fragments of the tabernacles, which we now see over the doors leading from the aisles into the presbytery, having been discovered, the tabernacles were reconstructed of the old with some new material. But more important work had to be undertaken in 1870. On Sunday, July 31st, the sound of cracking was heard in the tower, and Mr. J. Chapple, the clerk of the works, went up the next day to London to see Scott and asked him to come down at once to examine the tower; plaster was put over the crack to see if it was increasing or not. There were soon signs that the mischief was getting worse, and Scott ordered the tower to be shored up with timber, and temporary brick walls to be built below it. It seemed that the

rubble of the eastern piers had been made of mortar which had turned into dust, and that a big hole had been cut in the south-eastern pier. This, according to Lord Grimthorpe, had apparently been done with the intention of demolishing the tower, probably soon after the time of the dissolution of the monastery, for the hole contained timber shores which were sufficient to support the tower while the workmen were enlarging the hole, but which were probably intended to be set on fire and burnt away, thus allowing the workmen to escape before the tower fell. This wood was found partially decayed, and probably to its state the settlement of the tower was partially due. The hole was, by Scott's direction, filled with bricks laid in cement, and cement was poured in to fill up all the interstices; some of the decayed rubble was cut out of the piers and brickwork put in to take its place; the walls were tied with Yorkshire flagstone and iron rods, and were grouted with liquid cement wherever possible. It was an anxious time for those in charge of the work; it was only after many days and nights of incessant labour, that they felt sure that the sinking of the tower was arrested and that the new work was holding up the weight.

In 1875 it was discovered that the south-west clerestory was beginning to crumble away. Lord Grimthorpe had this shored up at his own expense. A new committee was soon after this appointed, and in March, 1877, a faculty was granted to this committee "to repair the church and fit it for cathedral and parochial services." The first Bishop, Dr. Claughton, who up to this time had been Bishop of Rochester, choosing the northern of the two parts into which his diocese was divided, was enthroned as Bishop of St. Albans on June 12th, 1877, and on the following day the restoration of the nave was begun. The church was in a very bad state: the weight of the roof and injudicious repairs had thrust the clerestory walls about forty inches out of the vertical plane. There was much controversy at the time as to what should be done, and in the middle of it Sir Gilbert Scott died, in March, 1878. In May, however, the roof having been lifted, the leaning walls were forced up into a vertical position by hydraulic pressure. Some of the restorers were in favour of retaining a flat roof; others advocated putting on a high-pitched one again, raising its ridge to the height of the original Norman roof, as indicated by the weather marks on the tower. Fortunately the latter course was adopted; fortunately because

the church, seen from the outside, lacks height in proportion to its length, and the ridge of the roof now visible above the parapets has given it some of the extra height it so much needed. The subsequent raising of the transept and presbytery roofs on the other three sides of the tower was necessitated by the raising of the roof of the nave.

Lord Grimthorpe drew up a list of "symptoms of ruin," twenty-two in number, which it would take too much space to reproduce here; but unless his account is exaggerated, it would seem that scarcely any part of the building save the tower could be looked on as secure. He applied for a new faculty which would give him unlimited power to "restore, repair, and refit the church." This faculty was granted, and he exercised his powers to the full; and as a result, though the church has been made sound and secure, probably for many centuries to come, yet many of its most interesting features have been destroyed, the most terrible damage having been done in the transept.

The west front which he rebuilt, though not altogether satisfactory, yet is greatly superior in design to his subsequent work at the south and north ends of the transept. These originally had corner turrets, octagonal in plan; these turrets were pulled down and square ones, finished by pyramidal caps, put in their place. The entire south front of the transept was pulled down and rebuilt, and a new window consisting of five lancets occupying its whole width inserted. The central light rises high into the gable and above the level of the inner ceiling. The lancets on either side are intermediate in height between the central and side ones when they are seen from without, but when seen from within the tops of all are of the same height, as they could not be raised above the level of the ceiling. The parts of the three middle lancets seen from without above this level are backed up with black felt across the ceiling, and their upper parts light the space between the ceiling and the high roof. This window is a feeble imitation of the "Five Sisters" of York, and is utterly out of place in the narrow transept at St. Albans; but bad as this south window is, the one at the north end of the transept is worse. Here Lord Grimthorpe inserted a circular window, the design being such as a child might make who was given a sheet of cardboard with a large circle drawn on it, which he was requested to cover symmetrically with a number of half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences. Another piece of unnecessary alteration

was the destruction of the slype at the south end and the re-erection of its disjointed members as curiosities in the new work, its western doorway, with an added order, having been let into the centre of the south wall of the transept, and the arcading placed in two different positions.

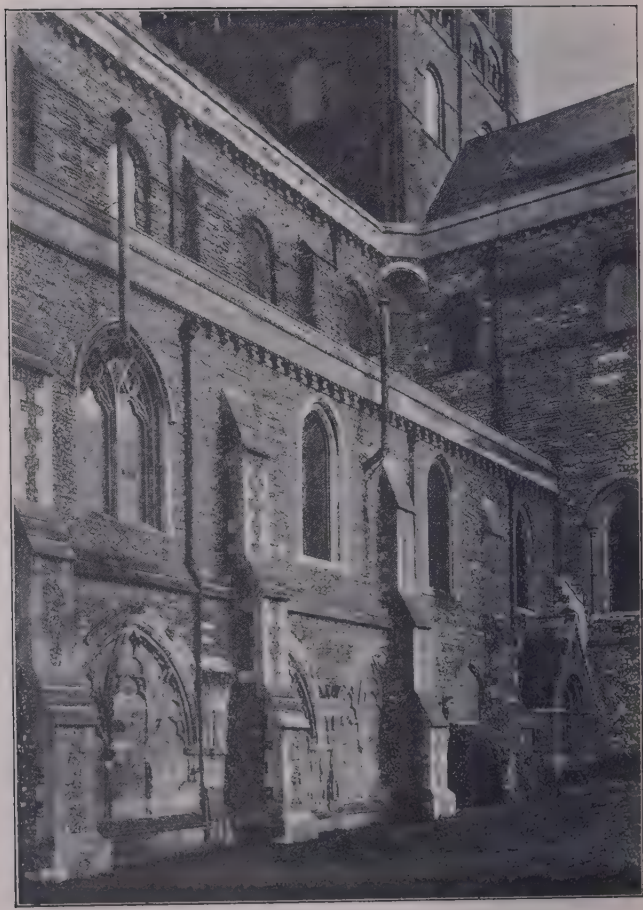
THE ARCADE IN THE SLYPE BEFORE ITS REMOVAL.

More satisfactory is the work in the Lady Chapel and the space sometimes called the antechapel; here the old carving had been terribly mutilated by many generations of schoolboys, and the new work which has been put in is good of its kind, and distinctive in its treatment. Lord Grimthorpe vaulted the Lady Chapel in stone. Much other work was done by him in various parts of the building. He rebuilt the clerestory windows of the

presbytery and some of those in the nave; introduced windows into the blank walls at the western part of the nave, both on the north and south, for which he deserves commendation, as the original reason for no windows having existed here was only that the monastic buildings, now destroyed, abutted against the south aisle of the nave, and the Church of St. Andrew stood on the north side; when this church was pulled down a plain wall was built, and the thrust of the roof had forced this and the original wall on the south side outwards, after the buildings which had acted as buttresses had been removed.

One piece of modern restoration was not done by Lord Grimthorpe, namely that of the Wallingford screen behind the high altar. The statues on this having been destroyed and the screen itself damaged, Mr. H. H. Gibbs, now Lord Aldenham, offered to restore it, working under Lord Grimthorpe's faculty. After a time a dispute arose between them, chiefly over the introduction of a statue of Christ on the Cross in the centre of the screen, and the erection of an altar with a stone top below it. This led to a lawsuit, the final result of which was that Mr. Gibbs was allowed to finish the screen in his own way, but not to do anything to any other part of the church, a thing he wished to do. The altar is not yet in position; when this is placed where it is intended to stand, the work of restoration will be complete, and nave, choir and presbytery, and Lady Chapel will then alike be capable of being used for service, forming in reality three distinct and fully fitted churches under one roof, the retro-choir being intended for use as a chapter-house whenever a chapter shall be created.

FLOOR TILE WITH
ARMS OF BEAUCHAMP.



ANGLE BETWEEN NAVE AND TRANSEPT.

THE NEW WEST FRONT.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXTERIOR.

THE visitor who wishes to obtain, at first sight, the most impressive view of the Cathedral Church of St. Alban, should alight at the London and North-Western Station, at which all the trains from Euston and many of those from King's Cross arrive. This station is about half a mile south of the city, and from it a road runs up Holywell Hill, which, passing eastwards of the church, leads to the centre of the city. But a road running off to the left before reaching the top of the hill leads past the south side to the entrance at the west front of the Cathedral. Seen from the south the church, though it does not actually stand quite on the summit, seems to crown with its enormous length the ridge of hill to the north. Most of those who visit St. Albans for the first time feel a sense of disappointment. The church has no far-projecting buttresses to give light and shade, no flying buttresses or pinnacles like those that lend such a charm to most French and many English churches. All is severely plain, partly on

account of the very early time at which the greater part of the existing church was built, partly on account of the material used for its walls. Abbot Paul of Caen, who designed it, trusted entirely to mass and proportion for the effect he wished to produce. But we do not see it as he designed it, and possibly built it. When we remember that he came from Caen, and seems to have used St. Stephen's Church, at that time recently built by Duke William, as a model, though he planned his own church on a grander scale, he must have contemplated two western towers even if he did not erect them—though, as previously stated, there is a division of opinion on the part of authorities on this subject. These western towers, if they were built, as well as the central one, would be crowned by pyramidal caps; and such towers, finely proportioned, would give the church the height which it so much needs, and the lack of which we feel so acutely to-day. The raising of the roofs at the time of the restoration to their original pitch was an undoubted gain, for without it the building looked lower and longer even than it does now. The church as we see it has been sadly injured by Lord Grimthorpe's work at both ends of the transepts, and whatever may be said about the western front in itself, yet no one can deny that, had the church been flanked by two towers standing, as at Wells and Rouen, outside the line of the aisles, even though the front itself were as plain as that of St. Stephen's at Caen, it would have been far more impressive.

There is another point in which the church as it exists differs from the church as it might have been seen soon after Abbot Paul had built it. Then its walls were covered without as well as within with plaster, within richly decorated with colour, and without whitewashed. How different it must have looked with its vast mass seen from a distance rising above the wooded slopes, white as a solid block of Carara marble gleaming in the sun, and the lead-covered roofs of nave, transept, choir, and towers shining with a silvery lustre. Many modern restoring architects strongly object to plaster, and many a rough wall both external and internal, which the builder never intended to be seen, has been scraped and pointed under the idea that plaster is a sham, which it is not, unless indented lines are drawn on it to make it appear like blocks of ashlar. The rich red of the Roman brick in St. Albans walls and towers is so delightful, that perhaps we may think Scott did well in abandoning his idea of replastering them; yet nothing could have so entirely altered the general

appearance of the building as this scraping away of the plaster. Besides the general view from Holywell Hill, there are two other distant points of view which should not be missed: one from Verulam woods, to the south-west; and one from the fields in which the ruins of Sopwell Nunnery stand. From this latter point it looks best after sunset on a cloudless evening, when the tower stands up in majestic grandeur against the saffron sky, and looking at it one can well imagine how much grander it must have looked when the tower bore some fitting termination, either the Norman pyramid or the later octagon, or even possibly the wooden spire of the Hertfordshire spike order which succeeded it.

The West Front. We will begin our examination of the existing exterior with the west front, and then proceed in order round the building along the south side, east end and north side, although in reality iron railings will prevent us from making a complete circuit, and necessitate our retracing our steps and making a fresh start at the west of the railings. Still there is no part of the exterior to which we cannot gain easy access.

Lord Grimthorpe's west front is built of stone; the illustration, p. 23, will enable the reader to form a good idea of its appearance. It took the place of one of patchwork character: the porches and lower parts were of thirteenth-century date; the upper part above the central porch contained Abbot John of Wheathampstead's large Perpendicular window, repaired and patched at various times; and brick walls closed the west end of the aisles. Lord Grimthorpe's idea was to design a front in the style prevalent in the second half of the thirteenth century. The design has been much criticized, but its general appearance will not be distasteful to the ordinary visitor, and is as good as is most nineteenth-century work. In certain respects it is more pleasing than the rival design of Mr. John Scott, with its mixture of Perpendicular features with those of earlier styles, its battlemented octagonal turrets, two of which were to be surmounted by spikes. There are two features of the existing front, one not shown, the other easily overlooked in the photograph, which should be noted. First, the arched cill of the central window, and second, the manner in which the back of the gable over the central door has been chamfered off so that it should not come up close to the glass and make a dark triangle against the lower part of the window when seen from the inside. The

doors are all new; the side doors had vanished, and the central ones were too short for the restored doorways. The western porches, which Sir Gilbert Scott spoke of as some of the most exquisite thirteenth-century work in existence, were almost entirely rebuilt by Lord Grimthorpe. Fortunately some drawings were made for Sir Gilbert Scott, one of which, by the courtesy of Mr. Murray, we have been able to reproduce, p. 11.

The South Side. The south clerestory has no less than twenty-three windows. The ten westernmost, partially restored by Scott, are connected by an arcading; the next ten, as well as the wall that contains them, are new—built by Lord Grimthorpe; the parapet, fortunately quite plain, was rebuilt at the time when the roof was raised; the three easternmost windows of the clerestory are formed of Roman brick in brick walls much restored, and are separated by brick buttresses.

The south aisle roof is partly lead (Scott) and partly, at the eastern end, of red tiles (Lord Grimthorpe). Lord Grimthorpe cut four windows in the western bays of the aisle, in which no windows had originally existed, as domestic buildings abutted against the church here. The three eastern windows of Abbot William of Trumpington's time were rebuilt in the old style; the five bays to the west of these were refaced with brick and flint, as the original clunch stone had perished, owing to exposure to the weather. The arcading of the north walk of the cloister may still be seen. It will be noticed that this arcading did not follow the division into bays of the aisle walls above. The cloister walk acted as a kind of continuous buttress to the south aisle wall, and owing to its removal this part of the wall was gradually pushed outward. To strengthen it Lord Grimthorpe built buttresses, naturally following the division of the upper part of the walls, but thereby cutting across the arcading of the cloister walk in a most ugly fashion. By building flying buttresses instead, he might have preserved the whole of the arcading of the cloister walk unbroken, but he considered that this plan would have been ugly, and that the buttresses he did build were constructively better; possibly they may be, but most of us will be of the opinion that, as far as appearance goes, the plan adopted was the less satisfactory. The porch over the Abbot's door in the corner is entirely new. It probably is useful as a support for the wall, but that is all that can be said in its favour. Lord Grimthorpe thought that this would be used as

an entrance to the church on this side, but it has not been so used. It is worthy of notice that this church is destitute of porches, either on the southern or northern side; probably because they were not needed in a purely monastic church.

The South Transept. The south arm of the transept was most ruthlessly dealt with by Lord Grimthorpe; no doubt it was in an unsafe condition, but his alterations here have been criticized severely, though not more severely than they deserve.

THE SOUTH TRANSEPT AS REBUILT.

The south front with the five enormous lancet windows—the lower parts of them lighting the church, the upper parts of the three central ones the space between the ceiling and the outer roof —was entirely rebuilt, together with the corner turrets. The slype or passage between the transept and the chapter-house, leading from the cloister to the cemetery of the monks, has been practically destroyed, some of the arcading having been removed and rebuilt into the interior face of the new south wall, some rebuilt into the south wall of the slype; the stones of the west doorway of the slype with modern additions were used up in

making a doorway in the centre of the south transept wall into the slype, and a new doorway was built at the east end of the slype, thus forming a way into the transept which seems now chiefly used as a passage for carrying in coke for the stoves in the transept.

The architectural **choir**, containing the presbytery and the Saint's Chapel, consists of five bays. The clerestory windows are Decorated ones of three lights each, the tracery being different in

THE LADY CHAPEL, CHOIR AND TRANSEPT FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

the different windows. They are set in a brick wall which, in the latter part of the thirteenth century, had been raised so as to allow of higher windows being set in it. The tracery is all new, Lord Grimthorpe keeping only the old outlines and leading lines of the mullions. The ridge of the roof of this part of the church was raised by Lord Grimthorpe to its original height, the same as that of the other three roofs that abut against the tower. As the side walls from which this roof springs are higher than those of the nave and transept the pitch is lower, and the window in the gable designed by Lord Grimthorpe is triangular; below this,

in the east wall, is a geometrical window with a small, one-light window on either side of it; all of these are rebuilt. The south aisle of the presbytery contains two small, round-headed windows, and further to the east two three-light, and then one two-light window; beneath two of these are doors. All this part of the church has been extensively restored, as has also been the retro-choir or antechapel, as it is sometimes called. Through this, after the dissolution, a public footway was cut, which was closed in 1870, and a great deal of reconstruction was needful. This part of the church has two bays, each bay with a window on each side, and one facing east on each side of the Lady Chapel.

The **Lady Chapel** has three bays; the tracery seen on the outside is new, though it is old inside, for Scott cut the mullions down the middle so as to retain the statuettes that they bore on the inside. There is a low vestry built against the south-eastern bay of the Lady Chapel; the window above this is triangular; the windows of the vestry itself are shown in the illustration, p. 28, as also is the five-light window in the east wall of the Lady Chapel. The north side of the Lady Chapel resembles the southern.

The North Transept. The character of the north presbytery aisle and the north arm of the transept may be seen by examination of the illustration, p. 30. It will be observed that the north front of this contains a large circular window measuring twenty-nine feet across the glass, filled by a number of circular apertures. This is Lord Grimthorpe's design, upon which much not undeserved ridicule has been showered. He informs us that this arm of the transept was in a somewhat better condition than the southern one, but that all the upper part and the turrets needed rebuilding. In the rebuilt walls of the transept he used the original material as far as it would go, supplementing it by some modern bricks made in imitation of the Roman ones.

The illustration, p. 30, shows the iron railings which, unless a door in them be unlocked, prevent further progress westward, and necessitate a retracing of our steps right round the church till we again reach the north arm of the transept. In the north front of this may be seen a Norman door near the north-west corner, through which pilgrims passed who wished to visit the shrine of the martyr: they entered the precincts by the Waxhouse gate, buying their candles there, and went down the path which is now

THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

called "the Cloisters," from which the photograph on p. 30 was taken. In the west wall there is an upper row of three round-headed brick windows once recessed, and a lower one of two twice recessed.

The North Side. The north clerestory of the nave has eight round-headed brick windows at the eastern part, followed by lancets similar to those on the south side. Flat buttresses of brick are built against the clerestory wall between the round-headed windows. The aisle windows, most of them rebuilt, are in Decorated style. A length of eighty feet of the wall towards the western end of the aisle, which had been built about 1553, when the Chapel of St. Andrew had been destroyed, was rebuilt and buttresses built against it to counteract the thrust of the clerestory, which leans outward. In this wall, as on the opposite side of the church, Lord Grimthorpe inserted windows; and placed a new sloping roof over the north aisle, covering the triforium arches which had been glazed as windows in the fifteenth century; this roof is covered with dark-coloured tiles. We may notice in the north aisle wall a brick door in the fourth bay from the east; this was cut by Lord Grimthorpe and leads into the vestry; also a walled-up door in the sixth bay, which led from the church into the graveyard, and another in the sixth bay, which formerly led from the north aisle into the chancel of St. Andrew's Church; this Lord Grimthorpe converted into a cupboard in the thickness of the wall. The only other thing noteworthy at this part of the exterior is a small piece of the north aisle wall of St. Andrew's Church near the footpath.

The Tower. There yet remains the magnificent tower. It is 144 feet high and is not quite square in plan, measuring 47 feet from east to west, and two feet less from north to south. The walls are about seven feet thick; in the thickness, however, passages are cut. It has three stages above the ridges of the roof. The lower stage has plain windows in each face, lighting the church below; the next stage, or ringing room, has two pairs of double windows; and the upper or belfry stage, two double windows of large size, furnished with louvre boards. The parapet is battlemented, and of course of later work than the tower itself. The tower is flanked by pilaster buttresses, which merge into cylindrical turrets in the upper story. For simple dignity the tower stands unrivalled in this country. It must have been splendidly built to have stood as it has done so many centuries

without accident. Winchester tower fell not long after its building, Peterborough tower has been rebuilt in modern days; but Paul of Caen did not scamp his work as the monks of Peterborough did, and no evil-living king was buried below the tower, as was the case at Winchester, thus, according to the beliefs of the time, leading to its downfall. Tewkesbury tower alone can vie with that of St. Albans, and the seventeenth-century pinnacles on that tower spoil the general effect, so that the foremost place among central Norman towers as we see them to-day may safely be claimed for that at St. Albans. Few more beautiful architectural objects can be seen than this tower of Roman brick, especially when the warmth of its colour is accentuated by the ruddy flush thrown over it by the rays of a setting sun.

The view from the tower when the air is clear is magnificent, but unfortunately the privilege of ascending the tower once accorded to visitors has, on account of unseemly behaviour, been necessarily withdrawn, and only by a special relaxation of this rule, through the kindness of the Dean, was the writer enabled to inspect the upper parts of the church.

THREE OLD PAVEMENT TILES.

THE NAVE FROM THE WEST END.

CHAPTER III.

THE INTERIOR.

The floor levels.—The Church of St. Alban is built so that its axis points considerably to the south of east, a thing that would hardly have been expected, seeing that the sun rises as far to the north of east as it ever does on St. Alban's Day, June 22nd. The orientation of the church may have been due to the fact that no great attention was paid to it by the builders, or it may have been due to the natural slope of the ground, which would have made the building of the church difficult had the east end been swung round further to the north where the ground is higher, and the west end to the south-west where it is lower; even as the church was built the slope of the ground has had its effect on the floor levels. These have been modified from time to time; to describe all the changes would take too much space, but it may be interesting to state the differences of level that exist at the present day.

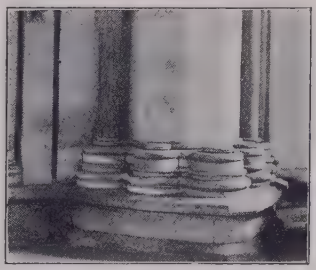
On entering by the west door a peculiarity will at once be noticed. About fifteen feet from the inner side of the west wall there is a rise of five steps which stretch right across the church from north to south. The floor to the east of these steps slopes imperceptibly upwards for eight bays, when a rise of three more steps is met with. On this higher level stands the altar, which is backed up by the rood screen. There is another step to be ascended to the level of the choir, and another to reach the space below the tower. Five steps lead from this into the presbytery; there is another step at the high altar rails, and four more lead up to the platform on which the high altar will stand. From the space below the tower one step leads up into the north aisle and two more into the north arm of the transept. From the level of the south choir aisle and south transept two steps lead up into the south aisle of the presbytery; from this aisle there is a rise

of four steps into the aisle south of the Saint's Chapel, and from this into the chapel itself a rise of four more. So that the floor of this chapel is, with the exception of the high altar platform, which is one step higher, the highest in the whole church, or nineteen steps above the floor just inside the west door. From the aisle of the Saint's Chapel one step leads into the retro-choir, and two more into the Lady Chapel; hence the floor of the Lady Chapel is one step lower than that of the Saint's Chapel. If we take seven inches as the average height of a step, it would appear that the floor of the Lady Chapel is about ten feet higher than the floor at the west end of the nave.

As we stand just inside the west door of the church we are struck by the length of ritual nave, about 200 feet, the flatness of the roofs, and the massiveness of the arcading dividing the nave from the aisles; for, though the four western bays on the north side and five on the south are Early English in date, there is none of that lightness and grace that we are accustomed to associate with work of this period, no detached shafts of Purbeck marble such as we see at Salisbury, no exquisitely carved capitals such as we meet with at Wells. William of Trumpington seems to have aimed at making his work harmonize with the Norman work that he left untouched; and when the rest of the main arcade on the south side was rebuilt in the next century, it was made to differ but little in general appearance and dimensions from Abbot William's.

The vertical proportions of the nave elevation are very fine. If the whole be divided into nine equal parts, four of these are occupied by the main arcade, two by the triforium, and three by the clerestory. The view eastward is often closed by a dark red curtain that hangs behind the organ, which stands in a gallery behind the rood screen. The screen divides the congregational nave from the three eastern bays of the architectural nave, which form the western part of the ritual choir. When the curtain is drawn aside we get a view of the tower arches and more of the length of the church is seen. It is to be hoped that no attempt to move the organ will now be made, as some, no doubt, would suggest, in order to get a more open vista; for the organ stands just where it can be used equally well for a service either in the nave or choir, and its sound can be heard with more effect than if it were stowed away on either side of the church. The longest view of the church which can be obtained is to be seen by

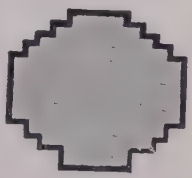
standing at the extreme west end of the south aisle, from which, when a draught-excluding curtain that hangs across the aisle just to the east of the transept is drawn aside, the view extends as far as the east window of the retro-choir, distant about 440 feet from the western wall, that is, about one-twelfth of a mile. A better idea of the enormous length of the whole building is given by saying that it is about a tenth of a mile long, rather than by giving its length in feet.



BASE OF INCOMPLETE PIER.

At the extreme west of the nave, on the north side, will be seen the base of what was intended for an Early English pillar, probably John de Cella's work, for provision is made for the slender detached columns of Purbeck marble, the intended use of which his successor abandoned. An inscription beneath the west window records the fact that when pestilence prevailed in London in the reign of Henry VIII., and again in that of Elizabeth, the courts of justice were held in the nave. This took place in the years 1543, 1589, and 1593.

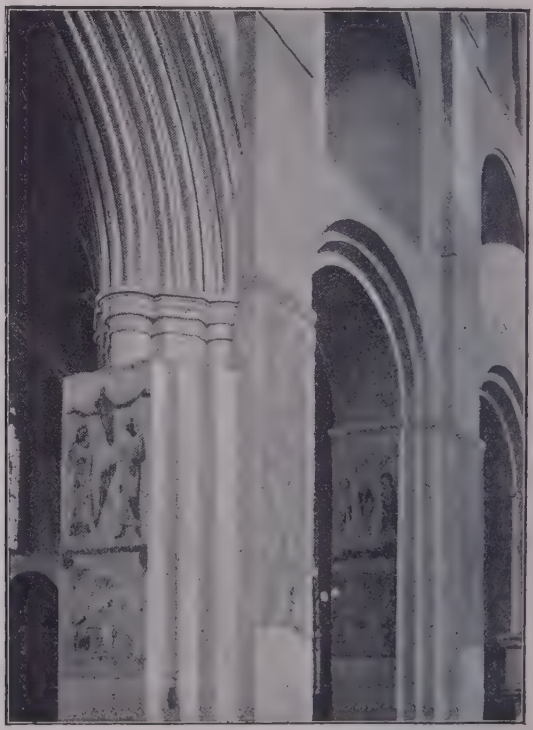
On the second pier on the north side is an inscription to the memory of Sir John Mandeville, who was born at St. Albans early in the fourteenth century, and educated at the monastery school. He studied medicine and set out in 1322 for his famous travels, professing, in the account which he published in French in 1357 in Paris, to have visited not only every part of the south of Europe, but many parts of Asia, even China. It is not known where he was buried, whether in England or abroad, and the statement of the Latin inscription on this pillar that he was buried in this church cannot be regarded as more trustworthy than most of the statements in the book of travels.



PLAN OF PIER.

The first four bays on this side are thirteenth-century work.

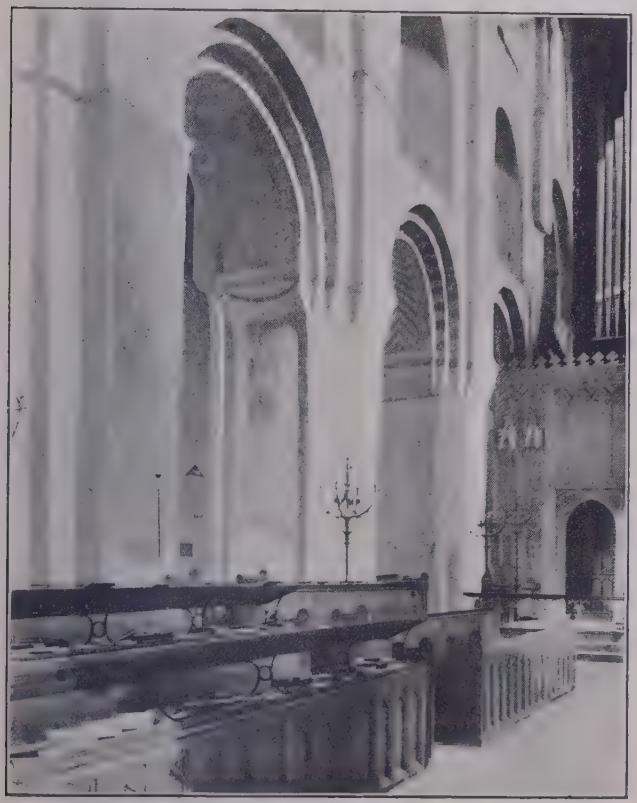
The junction of this with the earlier Norman work is of the most curious character: the Norman pier was cut off level, a short distance below the impost, and on the top of this three courses of



ARCADE ON NORTH SIDE OF NAVE.

the Early English pier were laid. Why the Early English pier was not carried down to the ground, in a way similar to that in which the easternmost Early English pier on the south side is carried, we cannot tell. It has been conjectured that some special sanctity

attached to the statue which stood on the bracket, which may still be seen on the western face of this pier. It will be noticed



EASTERN PART OF NORTH SIDE OF NAVE.

how plain is the plan of the Norman piers (see illustration, p. 37). They have no capital, only a projecting course of brickwork from

which the arch springs. The two easternmost piers, however, were altered at some time (see illustration, p. 39), and a rough kind of capital formed by cutting away the pier below. The Norman piers were first covered with plaster, and then painted both on their western and southern faces, and when the white-wash with which they had been covered in post-Reformation days was removed in 1862, the frescoes were discovered in a more or less perfect condition. All those on the western faces with one exception, represent the same subject, the Crucifixion, with a second subject below. No doubt against these piers altars used to stand, and these frescoes served, as we should say, as painted reredoses or altarpieces.

The subjects are as follows, beginning at the west of the Norman arcade:

First pier, west face. Christ on the Cross, crowned; the Virgin on the north side, St. John on the south, holding a book. Beneath, Virgin (crowned and holding a sceptre) and Child; on each side an angel censing. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

South face. St. Christopher. Fourteenth century.

Second pier, west face. Christ on the Cross; the Virgin with clasped hands on south side, St. John on north. Beneath, Virgin and Child under a canopy. Early thirteenth century.

South face. Archbishop Becket. Fourteenth century.

Third pier, west face. Christ on the Cross; the Virgin on the south side, St. John on north, resitng his head on his hand. Beneath, under a pointed arch, the Annunciation. This is in outline only. Fourteenth century.

South face. A woman in a blue gown holding a rosary in her left hand, possibly St. Citha (Osyth). Fourteenth century.

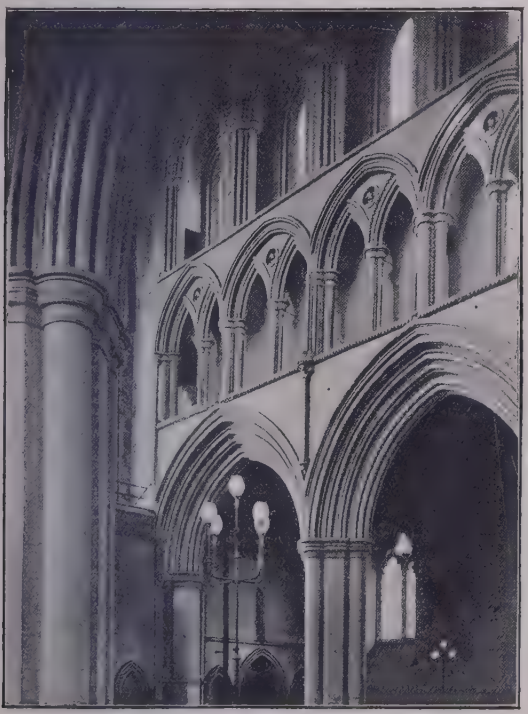
Fourth pier, west face. Christ on the Cross. Beneath, the Annunciation. A rude painting of the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

South face. A pilgrim and slight traces of another figure. The subject is supposed to be either Edward the Confessor relieving St. John disguised as a pilgrim, or St. John giving a ring to a pilgrim. Fourteenth century.

Fifth pier, west face. Christ on the Cross, much draped; the Virgin and St. John with red background. Beneath, the Coronation of the Virgin. Fourteenth century.

South face. This was once painted, but not enough remains to allow the subject to be made out.

Sixth pier, west face. Christ in his Glory; very slight traces only.



NORTH NAVE ARCADE : WESTERN END.

Besides these figure subjects painted on the piers, the soffits of the arches were decorated with colour, some of which still remains.

Although in the four western bays of the main arcade the Early English work is very plain, yet the triforium is ornate. The

arcading consists of two pointed arches in each bay, each comprising two sub-arches; the supporting columns are slender and enriched with dog-tooth mouldings, with which also the string-course below the triforium is decorated. The shafts, which probably were intended to support a stone vault over the nave, should be noticed.

This illustration also shows the character of the clerestory. The triforium over the Norman main arcade consists of large, wide-splayed, round-headed openings, in which the tracery and glazing introduced in the fifteenth century, when the aisle roof was lowered in pitch so as to expose the north side of the triforium to the sky, still remains. One of the triforium arches, namely, the third from the tower, was simply walled up at this time, and so retains its original form. The clerestory in this part of the church consists of plain, round-headed openings. Between each bay the outer southern face of each Norman pier is continued in the form of a flat pilaster buttress up to the roof.

The rood screen behind the altar, which is sometimes erroneously called St. Cuthbert's screen, is of fourteenth-century work, but much restored, and is pierced by two[1] doorways, which were used when processions passed from the nave into the choir. The doors themselves are fourteenth-century work. Against this screen once stood three altars. The northern one was dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Oswyn, King of Northumbria; the central one to the Holy Apostles, the confessors, and St. Benedict; and that on the south to St. Mary. These once stood against the western faces of the Norman piers of the south arcade of the nave, which fell in the fourteenth century. These piers doubtless corresponded with those we still see on the north side, and were probably similarly decorated with frescoes. The south arcade at its eastern end differs entirely from that on the north. This part of the church was rebuilt after the fall of part of the Norman arcade. The five Early English bays to the west are divided from the Decorated ones to the east by a massive pier, generally supposed to be Norman, but probably rebuilt. The northern face of this runs up as a pilaster buttress to the roof; the string round it in continuation of that below the triforium is carved with tooth ornament. West of this we have tooth ornament, to the east the characteristic ball flower. The

[1] This was the original Benedictine arrangement, which is said to remain in this church and Westminster Abbey only.

junction of the two styles is shown in the illustration below, from which it will be noticed that, though there is a general

SOUTH NAVE ARCADE, SHOWING THE JUNCTION OF THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

resemblance in the bays on either side of the dividing pilaster, yet the details are different. To the east we see shields below the triforium string, and heads at the termination of the hood

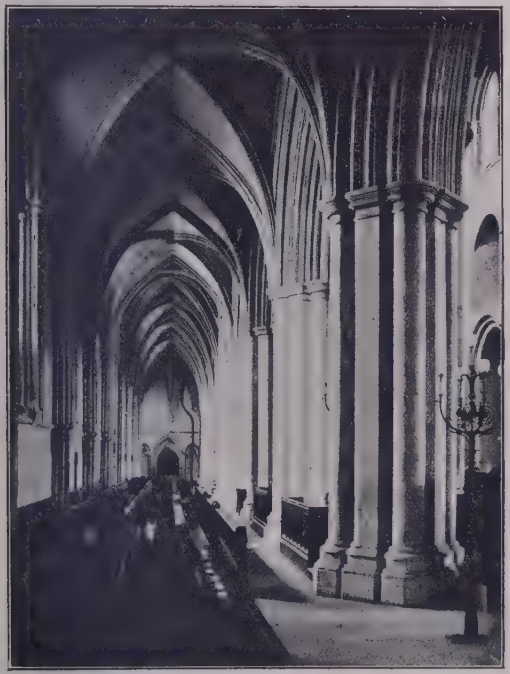
moulding. The head shown in this photograph is possibly that of Master Geoffrey, master mason to Abbot Hugh of Eversden; the others passing on to the east are probably those of Edward II., Queen Isabella, and Abbot Hugh. The shields, also counting from the west, are those of England, France, Mercia, England, Edward the Confessor, and England. The hood mouldings of the triforium and clerestory also terminate in heads, some of them grotesque. The Decorated piers were found by Lord Grimthorpe in a very unsound condition, not on account of any defect in the foundation, but on account of the bad mortar in which their rubble cores had been set. This had become dust, and tended to burst out the ashlar casing: this shell was indeed doing all the work of supporting the weight resting on the piers. Lord Grimthorpe shored up the arches, and in large measure rebuilt the piers of larger stones. He says: "It took no small trouble and scolding to get these worked as roughly as the old ones, so as to make the work homogeneous and bewilder antiquaries." This sentence shows the false principles on which Lord Grimthorpe sometimes worked; necessary repairs should never be executed with a view to make the work appear as old as that the place of which it takes.

The pulpit against the fourth pier on the north side, counting from the rood screen, is new, decorated with pentagonal diaper work—pentagons being apparently particularly attractive to Lord Grimthorpe.

The Organ.—The present organ when first built in 1862 was placed in the north arm of the transept, where the previously used organ had stood; in 1877 it was moved to the north-east corner of the nave; and was again moved in 1882, being then placed where it now is. In 1885 it was enlarged by Lord Grimthorpe, and the key-board was placed at the south end, so that the organist might command a view of the choristers, whether they were singing in the nave or in the choir. It is considered a fine and powerful instrument, and no better position in the church could be found for it.

The South Aisle.—At the western end of the south wall of this aisle may be seen the remains of an arch which was intended to lead into the south-west tower. Above it, high up, is a single-light window. The next three windows, of two lights each, with Decorated tracery, were inserted by Lord Grimthorpe in the blank wall; the next window probably dates

from the seventeenth century. The windows in the next five bays come down on the inside to a much lower level than those to the west (see illustration, p. 43), but the bottom of the glass was kept high so as to be above the roof of the north walk of the



SOUTH AISLE OF NAVE FROM EAST.

cloister, which rested against the wall of these bays. Two of these windows contain modern glass, one being inserted to the memory of the present Dean's father. There was once a door in the second bay from the west, which probably was used for processions, and in the seventh bay was a small door opening into the cloister, from which a passage in the thickness of the wall

led up by a flight of steps into the Abbot's chapel. This opening has been converted into a muniment room, and is closed by an iron door leading from the aisle. The vaulting of the western part is of stone, and was erected by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1878. The vaulting of the eastern part is fourteenth-century work erected at the time of the reconstruction of this part of the church in Decorated style, and is only plaster.

Against the south face of the large pier, at the junction of the Early English and Decorated bays, once stood an altar dedicated to our Lady of the Pillar, with a painting of the Adoration of the Magi above it. Iron railings inclosing the space between this pier and the next to the west formed a chapel set apart for the use of the Guild of St Alban. This guild was founded in the reign of Edward III., but dissolved at the time of Wat Tyler's rebellion. It was the duty of the brethren of this guild to follow the shrine containing the relics of St. Alban whenever it was carried outside the church.

HOLY WATER STOUP.

North Aisle.—At the west end of this aisle the beautiful though much restored holy water stoup should be noticed. A semicircular arch crosses this aisle, springing from the pier where the Early English and Norman work join (see illustration, p. 47). The roof is of timber with only a slight slope, built in 1860. The first four windows from the west are new, inserted by Lord Grimthorpe in the new wall which he built here. The other windows have new tracery, but the internal parts remain as William of Trumpington left them. Some old glass (fifteenth century) is to be seen in the eighth, ninth, and tenth windows of the aisle. The font, a modern one, stands at the east end of this aisle. It took the place in 1853 of a marble one, now in the workhouse chapel. There was once a brazen one brought as spoil from Dunkeld in Scotland, together with the lectern now in St. Stephen's Church; but this font disappeared during the civil wars. The continuation of the screen across the north aisle is due to Lord Grimthorpe. His object

was to form a vestry out of that part of the north aisle that lies along the north side of the choir as far as the transept. On the south side he merely erected a glazed wooden screen with a

NORTH AISLE OF NAVE.

door, through which visitors pass to enter the eastern part of the church.

It may be asked, of what use could the vast nave be to a monastery like that at St. Albans, which does not seem to have contemplated the admission of the laity to its services? The

monks' services were chaunted in the choir: the people had the parish church of St. Andrew for their use, in which, however, the priests of the Abbey officiated. But we must remember that in mediaeval times, on Sundays and on other great festivals, grand processions formed part of the ritual. The monks, leaving the choir, perambulated the church. The general order of the procession was probably as follows: the north arm of the transept, the north aisle of the presbytery into the Saint's Chapel, thence back into the aisle round the ambulatory or retro-choir, through the south presbytery aisle into the south arm of the transept, through the Abbot's door into the cloister, along the east, south, and west alleys back into the church by the blocked-up door in the south wall, up the nave, and through the two doors of the rood screen into the choir.

On special occasions it was customary for the shrines or feretories containing the relics of the saints—in this Abbey those of St. Alban and St. Amphibalus—to be removed from the pedestals on which they stood, and carried in solemn procession round the church and sometimes even outside it. For such ceremonials the naves were needed. It was also to allow for these processions passing round the church that the ambulatory was built leading round the back of the high altar. The idea of holding *ordinary* services for the laity in the nave is an entirely new idea, and however desirable they may be, yet they have led in modern days to the introduction into the building in some places of benches or seats like those of parish churches, and in others to the introduction of chairs, either of which additions considerably detracts from the architectural effect of the building. But though in early times the laity had not in all churches regular access to the building, yet it appears that they were some timesadmitted even in those churches that as a rule excluded them. For we find it recorded that a great number both of men and women were in the nave of St. Albans for the purpose of hearing Mass and praying at the time when the Norman piers on the south side of the nave fell in 1323.

South Choir Aisle.—Passing through the door mentioned above, we enter the aisle which, since it runs alongside of the ritual choir west of the crossing, is known as the south choir aisle. In this part of the church the Norman work of Abbot Paul remains. The aisle, however, was vaulted in stone by Lord Grimthorpe. In the south wall is a recessed tomb, where two

celebrated hermits, Roger and Sigar, were buried, and which was at one time a popular place of pilgrimage. In the recess now stands a stone coffin, but who originally occupied it there is nothing to show. Many of these would be found if the monks' cemetery were excavated, as after the twentieth Abbot, Warin (1183-1195), had issued his new orders regulating burial, all the monks were buried in coffins of stone. Roger the Hermit was a monk of St. Albans, a deacon; but though as monk he rendered obedience to the Abbot, he did not live within the precincts, for on one occasion as he was returning from Jerusalem three holy angels met him, and led him to a spot between St. Albans and Dunstable, called Markyate, when it was intimated to him that he should live the life of a hermit. Many were the trials and temptations he endured, many the combats he fought with the arch enemy of mankind. Once the prince of darkness even set the hermit's hood on fire, but the holy man was not disturbed, nor did he cease his prayers. In course of time a holy virgin of Huntingdon, Christina, came and occupied a cell in the immediate neighbourhood, and received religious instruction from Roger; here she endured many privations and mortified her body, bearing patiently the diseases brought on by her austerities. In time Roger, at the summons of God, quitted the world and went the way of all flesh, and his body was buried in the arched recess made for its reception. Christina still lived on. One day the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to her in the form of an infant, and abode with her for the space of a whole day; from that time forward no more temptations assailed her, and she was filled with the spirit of prophecy and wrought many notable miracles. She took the Abbot Geoffrey under her special care, advising him in matters of difficulty and reproving him when he did amiss. She was the first Prioress of the Benedictine Cell of Markyate, 1145.

Sigar lived about the same time in the wood of Northaw, south of Hatfield. He also was famous for mortifying his flesh and for his victories over evil spirits. It was his habit at times to come to matins at St. Albans, and then to return to his hermit's cell and pass the time in prayer and self-scourgings. Strange to say, though the devils could not disturb the holy man at his prayers, the nightingales of Northaw woods did distract him, and he therefore prayed that God would keep these little birds away, lest he should take too much delight

in their sweet songs; whereupon no more nightingales sang in those woods, and it is recorded that long after his time no nightingale dared venture within a mile of the spot where the hermit had dwelt. All which things are written in the chronicles of the Abbey, of which the reader may believe as little or as much as he will. Sigar was buried by the side of Roger. The arch above their grave may be seen in the illustration (p. 80), which also shows the Abbot's door which led into the cloister. It was built by Abbot de la Mare in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

SAXON BALUSTER SHAFTS IN SOUTH TRANSEPT.

The Transept.—From this aisle we pass into the transept. Its southern arm, notwithstanding the havoc wrought by Lord Grimthorpe, still retains many points of interest. On its eastern side the triforium, consisting of three bays, contains some baluster shafts of Saxon date; it is supposed that they were taken from the church which Abbot Paul demolished. It will be seen from the illustration that they are marked with rings, and close examination has shown that they were turned in a lathe, but not being quite long enough for their new position, extra bases and capitals were added; these were cut with an axe, as were also the cylindrical shafts of Norman date, which are

set alternately with the older ones. From the excellent state of preservation of the Saxon balusters, it is evident that they did not come from the exterior of the early church. Similar shafts may be noticed in the east wall of the northern arm of the

DOORWAY IN SOUTH TRANSEPT.

transept. There are two arches in the eastern wall which once led into chapels, the southern dedicated to St. Stephen, the northern first to our Lady, afterwards to St. John; they were pulled down in the fourteenth century to make room for a

treasury. One of the arches is now used as a cupboard, the other as a kind of museum of fragments of carved stonework. The south wall is entirely new. Lord Grimthorpe pulled down the front containing a Perpendicular window, originally fifteenth-century work, but rebuilt in 1832, and inserted his five tall lancets, beneath which built into the wall are ten of the arches with restored shafts of the arcade taken from the slype at the time of its destruction; the other six are to be seen in the south wall of the rebuilt slype, if slype it can now be called. Under this arcading in the transept is a doorway, built by Lord Grimthorpe, partly from fragments of the west doorway of the old slype, and partly from his own design. The rebuilt slype is no longer a passage as it formerly was, leading between the south end of the transept and the north wall of the rectangular chapter-house, but is closed at the west end by a wall with a window in it, and at the east end has a door. Fortunately a photograph taken before the destruction was available for reproduction, so that the reader may see the original condition of the south wall of the slype (see p. 20). The west wall of the transept has entirely different shafts in its triforium from those on the opposite side. A little double-light window or grating may be seen in the west wall near the aisle; it once opened into a small watching chamber, which was walled up at the time of the restoration for the sake of giving additional strength to the walls at the angle. It will be noticed that the pilasters projecting from the west wall do not come down to the ground. Lord Grimthorpe considers that these were not cut away, as might be imagined, but were originally built as we see them to give strength to the walls where they were thinner on account of the passages in their thickness. There is a recess in this wall which was once a doorway into the cloister; it now contains some old oak chests, in which are placed every week the loaves provided for the poor by Robert Skelton's charity, 1628. The wooden ceiling is due to Lord Grimthorpe.

The North Arm of the Transept.—The upper part of the north wall, with its high circular window, was rebuilt by Lord Grimthorpe. Above the triforium on the east and west walls are three Norman windows, and below these on the west side again two other Norman ones. The Norman doorway by which pilgrims to St. Albans shrine entered the church, and two Norman windows, with glass representing the four Latin doctors, inserted to the memory of Archdeacon Grant, who died

1883, may be seen below the wheel window; in the east wall are two pairs of lancets due to Lord Grimthorpe. Here, as in the corresponding wall on the south side, there are two arches which once led into two chapels. After their destruction altars dedicated to the Holy Trinity (north) and to St. Osyth (south) were placed in the recesses. Here may be seen two modern monuments: one the cenotaph of Dr. Claughton, first Bishop of St. Albans, 1877-1892;[1] this stands at equal distances from the east and west walls: the other, an altar tomb, was erected in memory of Alfred Blomfield, Suffragan Bishop of Colchester, who died 1884. The ceiling is by Lord Grimthorpe. A panel from the old ceiling, representing the death of St. Alban, may be seen in the south aisle of the presbytery.

If we stand under the central tower we get, looking westward, a view into the choir with its modern fittings, the stalls given by various donors, and the Bishop's throne which was brought hither from Rochester. From the way in which the piers are cut away on their faces looking into the choir, it is concluded that the backs of the original stalls reached to a considerable height. The piers, like those in the nave, were at one time painted, and on the west face of the second pier from the east of the north arcade are remains of a painting of the Holy Trinity. In 1875 Mr. Chapple discovered wall-paintings between the clerestory windows, three on the north and one on the south; the soffits of the arches are also coloured.

The painted ceiling of the choir was accidentally discovered during the restoration. A workman was cleaning one of the panels, which was coarsely painted, and happened to rub off the surface paint, disclosing other work below. The upper paint was then cleared away from all the other panels. Two, in the centre, bore a Scripture subject; the others bore, alternately, coats of arms and the monogram IHS, with wreaths of vine-leaves. The arms belong almost entirely to those who were by blood or marriage connected with Edward III.

The ceiling of the lantern, 102 feet from the pavement, is painted with the red and white roses of the houses of Lancaster and York, together with various coats of arms. The lofty arches beneath the tower (55 feet high) are of great grandeur, as will be seen from the illustration The four inside faces of the lantern

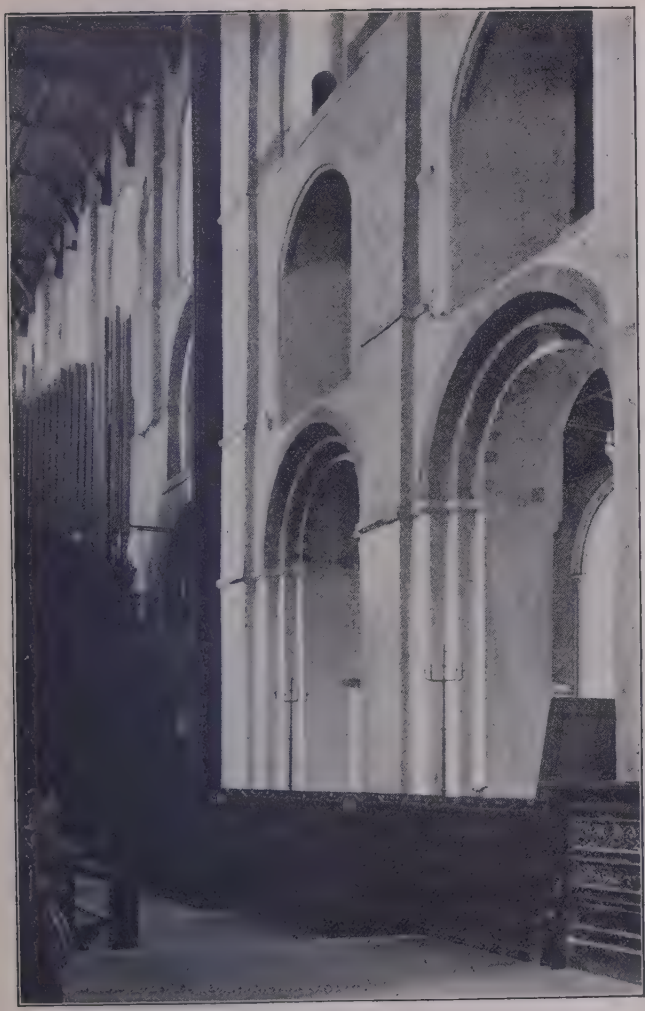
[1] Designed by Mr. J. O. Scott; carved by Mr. Forsyth, of Hampstead.

CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL of the PACIFIC LIBRARY

THE CROSSING, LOOKING WESTWARD.

are alike, each containing windows above the three arches of the arcade, each of which comprises two subarches springing from a quadrilateral shaft.

To the east is the **presbytery**, closed by the Wallingford or



THE CHOIR.

high altar screen. This screen was sorely dilapidated, and all its niches were stripped of their statues, no record remaining of whose statues originally filled them. Mr. H. Hucks Gibbs (now Lord Aldenham) undertook to restore this screen, making good the canopies and filling them again with statues. The screen is of clunch, a hard stone from the lower chalk formation quarried at Tottenhoe near Dunstable, a stone much used for interior work in the church, though it will not stand exposure to weather in exterior walls. The new statues are by Mr. Harry Hems of Exeter; the larger ones of magnesian limestone from Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire, and the smaller of alabaster. They are excellent examples of modern carved work. The general idea was to represent "the Passion of our Lord and of the testimony of the faith in that Passion given in the lives and deeds of men"[1] of English race. A careful comparison of the screen (see illustration, p. 58), with the key given (p. 59) will enable the reader to identify the persons represented.

The coloured altarpiece in high relief is by Mr. Alfred Gilbert, R.A., and is a work quite unique in character. It represents the resurrection. In the centre is the upper half of our Lord's figure; on one side is an angel holding a cross, emblem of faith; on the other, one holding a crystal globe, emblem of dominion; the wings of these angels are formed of mother-of-pearl, and before them are grills of brass scrollwork, intended to give an air of mystery to their appearance. The work does not appear to be fully finished, the grills being only roughly attached to the wall. The space before the altar is paved with slabs of marble.

In an arch south of the altar is Abbot John of Wheathampstead's chantry, containing a splendid brass of Flemish workmanship, which once covered the grave before the high altar in which Abbot Thomas de la Mare was buried. He is represented in full vestments carrying a pastoral staff and wearing a mitre, according to the Pope's grant, although he was not a bishop but only a mitred abbot, and therefore could not perform the rite of ordination, which could be administered only by the Bishop of Lincoln; the Abbey Church, though independent of him in all other matters, was for this purpose in his diocese. The rebus of Abbot John was three ears of wheat, and his motto

[1] Lord Aldenham's words in describing his scheme.

THE WALLINGFORD SCREEN.

"Valles habundabunt," an allusion to the fertile lowland of Wheathampstead, whence he came. This rebus may be found in various places where the work was due to him. Opposite to this chantry is the far more magnificent one of Abbot Thomas

St. Paul. St. Luke. St. Mark. St. MARY THE VIRGIN.

THE VENERABLE BEDE. | St. GERMAIN. | St. ERKENWALD. St. Margaret. | St. Ælfric.

St. George. | St. Benedict, Biscop. POPE ADRIAN IV. | St. Ethelburga. | St. Richard. St. ETHELDREDA. | (Door)

Edward, King of West Saxons. | St. Lawrence. | St. Lucy. | St. Wolfstan. | St. Osyth. | St. Alphege.

St. HUGH OF LINCOLN. | St. PATRICK. | St. AMPHIBALUS.

Angel. | Angel. | Angel.

Angel. | St. JOHN.

St. JUDE.
St. MATTHIAS.
St. SIMON.
St. MATTHEW.
St. BARTHOLOMEW.
St. THOMAS.
OUR LORD
(In Majesty).
St. JAMES, Minor.
St. PHILLIP.
St. JOHN.
St. JAMES, Major.
St. ANDREW.
St. PETER.

CRUCIFIX.

Angel. | BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

Angel. | Angel. | Angel.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR. | St. BENEDICT. | St. ALBAN.

St. Ethelbert. | St. Leonard. | St. Agnes. | St. Nicholas. | St. Frideswide. | St. Chad.

KING OFFA. | St. HELEN. | (Oak Door)

St. Oswyn. | St. Giles. | St. Cecilia. | St. Boniface. | St. Katherine. | St. David.

KING EDMUND. | St. CUTHBERT. | ST. AUGUSTINE.

St. Titus. St. Timothy. St. BARNABAS. ANGEL GABRIEL.

KEY TO THE SCULPTURE ON THE WALLINGFORD SCREEN.

Ramryge. His rebus is a ram wearing a collar with the letters R.Y.G.E. inscribed on it. This chantry was at one time, after

RAMRYGE CHANTRY.

the dissolution, appropriated as a burial-place for the Ffaringdons, a Lancashire family, but the original slab with Abbot Thomas's figure and inscription has been restored to its place.

Within the altar rails are four memorial stone tablets covering the graves of four fourteenth-century Abbots—Thomas de la Mare, Hugh of Eversden, Richard of Wallingford, and Michael of Mentmore. Four other Abbots are known to have been buried beneath the presbytery floor outside the altar rails—John de Marinis, John of Berkhampstead, Roger of Norton, and John Stokes—as well as other monks and laymen. It will be noticed that the presbytery is divided from the aisles by solid walls, pierced only for the two chantries above described, and for two doorways, one on each side, further west. Over each of these doorways is a tabernacle; that on the south was put together of fragments by Sir Gilbert Scott, and that on the north made to match it. The clerestory windows are Lord Grimthorpe's; the painted wooden vaulting which extends beyond the screen and over the Saints' Chapel is John of Wheathampstead's. It will be noticed that this springs from vaulting shafts, and it is by some considered that a stone roof was contemplated. The triforium here is an arcade without any passage. The pulpit, which stands close by the north pier of the eastern tower arch, was designed by Mr. J. O. Scott and given by the Freemasons of England, who regard St. Alban as their patron saint.

We will now turn to the south and pass eastward under the curtain which hangs beneath the western arch of the south aisle of the presbytery. On the south side we see, as we enter, a fourteenth-century holy water stoup, and further on, under a window, a wide round-headed archway which formerly led into a chapel now demolished, which once was dedicated to our Lady, before the larger chapel at the east end was built. In the next bay is a blocked Norman window from which the plaster has been scraped to show the character of the wall, built of Roman tiles; the quadripartite vaulting is of plaster with lines painted red to make it appear like stone. Opposite is a large oak money-chest, and above it on the wall is the figure of a mendicant (see p. 63), carved in wood by a verger in the eighteenth century, hat in hand, as if asking the passer-by to put a coin in the poor-box below. In the south wall is a doorway which led into the treasury. The next bay is largely rebuilt; on the south side is a door and opposite is the back of John of Wheathampstead's chantry. From this we pass into the south aisle of the Saint's Chapel.

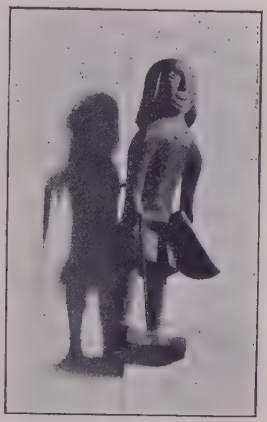
First we see the doorway on the north side, under which are steps leading up into the chapel, and further on we come to a

trellis-work of iron through which we can look across the space once occupied by the monument of "Good" Duke Humphrey

SOUTH AISLE OF PRESBYTERY.

of Gloucester into the Saint's Chapel. This grill is older (about 1275) than the rich canopy over the duke's grave, and was doubtless erected to allow of a view being obtained from

this aisle of the martyr's shrine. There are a number of figures of kings in the canopied niches over the grave, but it is not possible to identify them. Opposite are some remains of a stone screen of the Perpendicular period; it probably divided the aisle from some external chapel. After the chapel perished the wall was built up; but during the restoration this arcading was discovered. Through an oak screen, Lord Grimthorpe's work, we pass into the **retro-choir**. This, as we have before seen, was sadly mutilated after the Reformation, when the public path was made through this part of the building and the Lady Chapel turned into a grammar school; hence we shall find more modern work here than in any other equal area of the church. The part east of the passage was for long used as a covered playground for the boys and suffered much in consequence. It was originally built at the end of the thirteenth century. The arcading round these walls is new, much of it carved under the direction of Lord Grimthorpe by Mr. John Baker. The carving is of a naturalistic character, the vegetable forms being copied direct from the plants and trees of the neighbourhood. The oak ceiling of the south side and the flat ceiling of the centre are by Lord Grimthorpe; that on the north side by Sir Gilbert Scott.



WOODEN FIGURE OF A MENDICANT.

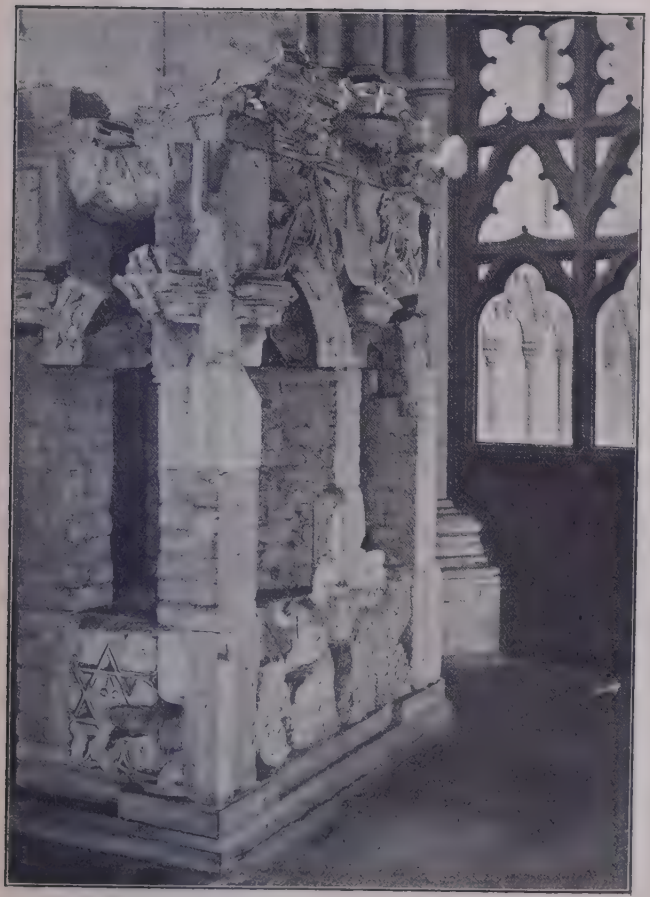
The shrine of St. Amphibalus once stood in the centre, but the reconstructed shrine, or rather pedestal of the shrine, was removed to the north aisle of the Saint's Chapel by Lord Grimthorpe, so as to be out of the way; for his idea was to fit this part of the church for use as a chapter-house, should a chapter ever be created, and as a consistory court. He built the low wall between it and the Saint's Chapel with seats under the arcading to be occupied by members of the chapter, and paved the floor with polished marble (see illustration, p. 64).

There were once several altars in this retro-choir; under the

east window on the south side one to our Lady of the Four Tapers, with an aumbry and triple-arched piscina in the south wall. This has been restored; the upper part is entirely new.

RETRO-CHOIR.

On the north side in a corresponding position was an altar dedicated to St. Michael; while altars dedicated to St. Edmund, King and Martyr, and to St. Peter stood to the west of the two pillars, respectively on the north and south sides; and another altar to St. Amphibalus stood to the west of his shrine in the



BASE OF THE SHRINE OF ST. AMPHIBALUS.

centre. It may here be noted that the east wall of the original Norman apse extended as far as the centre of the retro-choir.

BACK OF THE WATCHING LOFT.

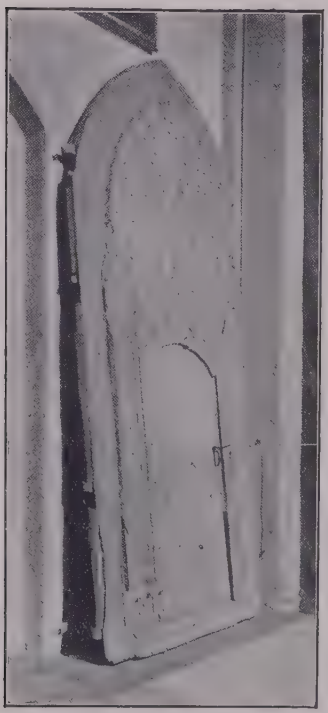
The north aisle of the Saint's Chapel is divided from the retro-choir by a glazed oak screen with a door in it, frequently kept locked. Just to the west of this is the pedestal of the shrine of

St. Amphibalus. This, like that of St. Alban's shrine, was broken up into many fragments after the dissolution of the monastery.

RAMRYGE'S CHANTRY FROM THE AISLE.

The fragments were built into sundry walls, but many of them were discovered when the walls blocking up the arches at

the east end of the Saint's Chapel were removed; they were put together as far as possible, but as the east and north sides are missing, the position the pedestal now occupies is not an unfitting one, as these sides are hidden (see illustration, p. 65). The letters R.W. may be seen on it. These are the initials of Ralph Whitechurch, sacrist, at whose cost the pedestal was built in the second half of the fourteenth century. Opposite this we see the back of the watching loft (see illustration, p. 66) erected for the monk who kept watch and ward over the martyr's shrine; further to the west is a doorway into the Saint's Chapel, and still further west the back of Ramryge's chantry. Beyond this is the north entrance into the presbytery, over which is a painting of the Lord's Supper, generally attributed to Sir James Thornhill and given to the church about two centuries ago; at one time it hung over the high altar. There is also a painting of Offa, probably fifteenth-century work, to be seen in this aisle. The two doors removed by Lord Grimthorpe from the central doorway of the west front have been set up against the west end of the walls of this aisle (see illustration).



ONE OF THE OLD WESTERN DOORS.

The Lady Chapel.—This chapel in its original condition must have been exceedingly beautiful; and although we have had occasion to find much fault with the work of restora-

tion, or rather destruction and needless alteration, in other parts of the church, yet here little but praise can be bestowed. Some may regret that the old wooden vaulting was not retained and repaired, but the new stone vaulting is beautiful in itself and

LADY CHAPEL.

more durable. A better material than cast iron might, however, have been found for the altar rails. The new carving is excellent in quality and right in principle. It has been done, not as most modern work is, by imitating the carved work of some particular period of architecture as set out for the carver in the architect's drawings, but by returning to the old system of

going to nature and carving from life models, so to say. It has been done in the same spirit as actuated the early work of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. It is said that the carvers had sprays of leaves and clusters of fruit and flowers before them as they carved, and imitated them as closely as the material on which they worked allowed them to do. Work done in this manner, provided the carver has skill and taste, is sure to show character and life, and to differ entirely from the mechanical conventionalisms we generally see in modern stone-carving.

The chapel dates from the latter part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth centuries. The work was probably begun in the time of Abbot Roger Norton, whose body was buried before the high altar in the presbytery, but whose heart was laid in a small box, which was discovered during the restoration, before the altar of St. Mary of the Four Tapers. Possibly his successor, John of Berkhampstead, carried on the work; but at Abbot Hugh's accession in 1308 the walls of the Lady Chapel had only been carried up as high as the string-course below the windows. The work of building was not continuous, as change in style shows; moreover we read in the Chronicles that Abbot Hugh of Eversden "brought to a praiseworthy completion the Chapel of the Virgin in the eastern part of the church which had been begun many years before." He is also recorded to have roofed the space to the west, that is, the retro-choir. It seems, then, that at the time when the alterations in the eastern part of the Norman church were begun, not only was the presbytery with its aisles laid out, but also the retro-choir as a group of chapels, and possibly the Lady Chapel as well; and that when Hugh was chosen Abbot he found the presbytery and Saint's Chapel finished, the walls of the retro-choir raised to their full height, and those of the Lady Chapel partly built. These he proceeded to finish. The side windows of the Lady Chapel are beautiful examples of the fully developed Decorated style; the jambs and mullions are ornamented with statuettes which, strange to say, escaped destruction. "The eastern window of five lights is a singular combination of tracery with tabernacle work, while the easternmost bay on the south side, which is partly obscured by the vestry, has an exquisite window above, consisting of a richly traceried arch placed within a curvilinear triangle, beneath which is a splendid range of niches, and, be-

neath them again, a gorgeous range of sedilia and piscinae."[1] The original wall arcading had cinque-foiled heads on the south side, and trefoiled heads on the north; but all these had been cut away before the restoration began, probably at the time when the walls were covered with panels to make the chapel more suitable for a schoolroom.

In this chapel, after its dedication, mass was sung daily, and an organ was provided to accompany the musical part of the service. The western end of the Lady Chapel was separated from the retro-choir by a screen, which of course perished after the dissolution. No modern screen has been put in its place, though one would be a great improvement. Projecting from the easternmost bay of the south side stands the Chapel of the Transfiguration, which was dedicated in 1430. This, rebuilt, is now used as a vestry. Beneath the floor of the Lady Chapel was buried the hated Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, grandson of John of Gaunt; Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, son of the famous Hotspur; and Thomas, Lord Clifford: whose bodies were found lying dead in the streets of St. Albans, after the first battle in 1455, in which they fell fighting for the Red Rose party. They were buried by Abbot John of Wheathampstead, who at this time was an adherent of that party, though he became a Yorkist after Queen Margaret had allowed her troops to plunder the Abbey when, in the second battle of St. Albans, she was victorious over the Earl of Warwick.

A considerable amount of work was necessary to refit this chapel for use. The restoration was begun by Scott and finished by Lord Grimthorpe.

Scott cut the mullions of the windows down the middle, retaining all the part inside the glass so as to preserve the statues, but renewing the part outside for the sake of strength. All the painted glass is modern, the gift of various donors. Lord Grimthorpe, in place of the wooden vaulting which was, he says, in a very unsound state, threw a stone vault over the chapel, raising its ridge three feet higher than that of the previous roof. All the arches of the arcade had been cut away, with the exception of two at the east end, one on each side of the altar, differing from each other as already mentioned. Lord Grimthorpe took as a model the one with the cinque-foiled head,

[1] Sir Gilbert Scott's Report on the Lady Chapel, 1875.

considering that the better of the two, and constructed the existing arcading all round the chapel. He rebuilt the Chapel of the Transfiguration, making its walls lower than before, so as not to obstruct the view of the window over it. The carving, chiefly the work of Mr. Baker, as already mentioned, represents various vegetable forms in a naturalistic manner, the plants chosen being for the most part such as grow in the neighbourhood—convolvulus, primrose, buttercup, poppy, gooseberry, blackberry, rose, maple, ivy, sycamore, pansy, polypody, and others.

Lord Grimthorpe also repaved the floor with marble slabs of three colours—black, red, and white. During the time the chapel was used for a schoolroom the floor had been a common wooden one. Practically, then, it will be seen that this Lady Chapel, with the exception of its walls and the windows with the statuettes on them, is a modern church, surpassing, indeed, most nineteenth-century work in beauty, and much the same may be said of the retro-choir or chapter-house.

The Saint's Chapel.—We must now return westward, through the south aisle of the ambulatory, past the back of Duke Humphrey's grave, and enter the Chapel of the Martyr by the door which opens into it from the aisle. The centre of the chapel is occupied by the reconstructed pedestal of the martyr's shrine. The ugly wooden railing that surrounds it is a great blot on the appearance of the chapel; no doubt it is necessary that the pedestal should be protected by some kind of barrier, but a light and elegant railing of brass would answer every purpose without marring the general effect, as the present cumbersome erection shown in all the accompanying illustrations of objects in this chapel does. It is to be hoped that either out of the general fabric fund, or by the generosity of some individual donor, this one blot on this fine chapel may be removed.

The bones of St. Alban were of course counted as the chief treasure of the Abbey, in some respects the most valuable relics in the kingdom, since they were the bones of the first Christian martyr in the island. It was meet and fitting, then, that the most splendid resting-place should be chosen for them. The bones themselves were inclosed in an outer and an inner case; the inner was the work of the sixteenth Abbot, Geoffrey of Gorham (1119-1149), and the outer of the nineteenth Abbot, Symeon (1167-1183). These coffers were of special metal encrusted with

rich gems. It is recorded that the reliquary was so heavy that it required four men to carry it, which they probably did by two poles, each passing through two rings on either side of the coffer. It is said to have been placed in a lofty position by Abbot Symeon; but the pedestal of which we see the reconstruction today was erected during the early part of the fourteenth century, in the time of the twenty-sixth Abbot, John de Marinis (1302-1308). This was built of Purbeck marble and consists of a basement 2 ft. 6 in. high, 8 ft. 6 in. long, and 3 ft. 2 in. wide, above

PEDESTAL OF ST. ALBAN'S SHRINE.

which were four canopied niches at each side and one at each end; these were richly painted and probably contained other relics; in the spandrels were carved figures, at the corners angels censing. At the west end was a representation of St. Alban's martyrdom; on the south side in the centre was, and still is, a figure of King Offa holding the model of a church; in the next spandrel to the east the figure of another king; on the east side a representation of the scourging of St. Alban, and on the north other figures, of which the only one remaining is that of a bishop or mitred abbot. In the pediments or gables were carvings of foliage, and round the top of the pedestal ran a richly

carved cornice; round the base stood fourteen detached shafts, on which perhaps the movable canopy rested, and outside three other shafts of twisted pattern on each side, which carried six huge candles, probably kept burning day and night, certainly during the night, to light the chamber holding the shrine. On this lofty pedestal, 8 ft. 3 in. high, the glorious shrine rested. It was rendered still more ornate than it was in Abbot Symeon's time by the addition of a silver-gilt turret, on the lower part of which was a representation of the Resurrection with two angels and four knights (suggested by the guard of Roman soldiers) keeping the tomb. A silver-gilt eagle of cunning craftsmanship stood on the shrine. All these additions were given by Abbot Thomas de la Mare (1349-1396). A certain monk also gave two representations of the sun in solid gold, surrounded by rays of silver tipped with precious stones. Over all was a canopy which, like many modern font-covers, was probably suspended by a rope running over a pulley in the roof, by which it might be raised. There is a mark in the roof remaining, possibly caused by the fastening of the pulley. An altar, dedicated to St. Alban, stood at the west end of the pedestal.

There are two quarry-shaped openings to be noticed on the north side of the pedestal near the floor level, one of which extends right through to the south side. Into these diseased arms or legs might be thrust for cure by virtue of the saint. At the time of the dissolution the shrine disappeared, and the marble pedestal was broken up into small fragments. In 1847 the rector, Dr. Nicholson, found a few of these, when opening the two northern of the blocked-up arches to the east of the chapel: and in 1872, when the wall that closed the end of the south aisle was removed and excavations were made to find the level of the aisle floor, many more fragments, numbering in all about two thousand, were found. These were carefully put together by Mr. Chapple, clerk of the works, some plain stone being used to take the part of missing portions, with the result that we see to-day, from which we can form some idea of the appearance of the shrine in the days of its glory, even to the colour decoration, for some of the fragments bear the original paint and gold.

Such a precious thing as this jewelled shrine and the still more precious bones within it could not be left for a moment unguarded and unwatched, for stealing relics, when a favourable

opportunity arose, was a temptation too great to be resisted by any monks, however holy. So on the south side of the shrine was erected a watching loft; the one that remains was constructed probably during the reign of Richard II., as his badge appears

WATCHING LOFT.

on it, but, no doubt, from the first there was some such place provided for the purpose of keeping guard. A similar loft may be seen in the cathedral church of St. Frideswide at Oxford, and a watching loft of a different construction in the south triforium at Malmesbury. The chamber had two stories; the lower

contained cupboards, in which vestments and relics were kept, these are now filled with various antiquarian curiosities, Roman pottery from Verulamium, architectural fragments, etc. An oaken staircase leads up into the chamber where the "custos feretri" sat watching the shrine day and night, guard of course being changed at intervals. It must have been trying work watching there during the night-time in frosty weather, but monks were accustomed to bear cold. The watching chamber (see illustrations, pp. 66, 72) was built of oak and was richly carved. On the south side of the cornice are angels, the hart—badge of Richard II., the martyrdom of St. Alban, Time the reaper, and the seasons; on the north the months of the year are represented.

The west side of this chapel is closed by the back of Wallingford's screen, on which may be seen five statues representing St. Peter, St. John, St. Mary, St. Stephen, and St. Michael. The eastern side is closed by a low wall, erected by Lord Grimthorpe in place of the wall by which these arches were completely blocked up after the dissolution. It was here that some of the fragments of the pedestal were found. Into his new wall Lord Grimthorpe has built some old fragments of carved work found in different places of the church.

The south side of this chapel is formed of the monument over the grave of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, surnamed "good" by an admiring people, though some modern historians hold that he had little real claim to this title. He was the son of Henry IV., and therefore brother of Henry V., and was uncle of Henry VI. and guardian to the young King in the early part of his reign. He who likes may read in any history of the part he played in the affairs of the country: how he incurred the hatred of the unscrupulous and vindictive Queen of Henry VI., Margaret of Anjou, "she-wolf of France"; how he was murdered by Suffolk, with, it is said, the connivance of the Queen and Cardinal Beaufort. It was at one time supposed that he was buried in London, but there is little doubt that he found a resting-place in a grave prepared for him in St. Alban's Abbey, on March 4, 1447. This would be during the time that John Stokes was Abbot, between the two abbacies of John of Wheathampstead. The body was discovered in its leaden coffin during the reign of Queen Anne, when another grave was being dug. The coffin was opened, and the duke's body was discovered to be in a good state of preservation in the coffin, which is described as being

"full of pickle." It is said that at one time the vergers would, for a due consideration, allow visitors to carry away the smaller

MONUMENT OF HUMPHREY, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

bones when, owing to the body having been removed from the preserving fluid, nothing but a skeleton was left.

The monument is a handsome one. It was probably erected

by Wheathampstead, who had been on terms of intimacy with the duke, when he for the second time became Abbot. The canopy over the grave is richly carved; the antelopes we see on it were the badge of the duke. His epitaph speaks of him, among other things, as

> Fraudis ineptae
> Detector, dum ficta notat miracula caeci.

This refers to the story told of him by Sir Thomas More, how he convicted an impostor who claimed to have been born blind, but to have received sight at St. Alban's shrine, by asking him the colour of the garments that the duke himself and others were wearing; all these questions were correctly answered by the beggar, who forgot for the moment that one born blind who had only just received his sight, would not have known the *names* of the various colours, though he might distinguish one colour from another. The beggar was punished for his imposture by being set in the stocks.

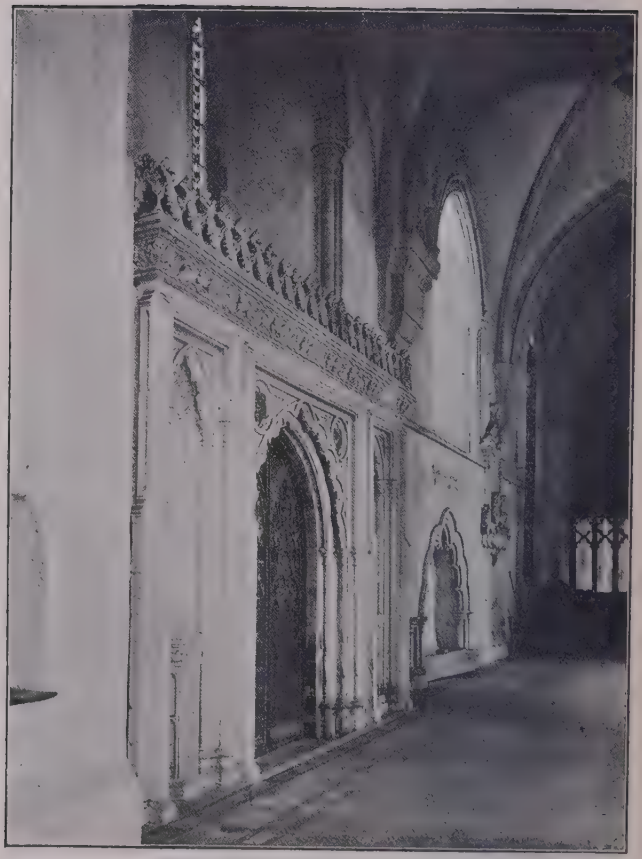
This story is introduced into the first scene of the second act of the second part of "Henry VI.," a reproduction of a St. Albans legend in which some students of the play will find an argument for attributing the play to Francis Bacon, who lived close by and would be likely to know the stories current in the town.

The Tower and Bells.—The ringing loft is reached by a staircase starting from the door near the north-west corner of the north arm of the transept. The steps were originally built of Roman bricks, but at the time of the restoration had fresh treads of stone laid on them, so that the ascent is an easy one; from this staircase one passes along the triforium gallery of the western side of the transept, and then up a staircase in the turret at the north-west angle of the tower to a room whose floor is above the flat ceiling of the lantern visible from the floor of the church. The bells are in the next story, and at no great height above the floor of the ringing loft. In the ringing loft may be seen boards on which are inscribed records of several memorable sets of changes that have been rung, with the dates, the number of changes, the time occupied, which was generally between three and four hours, and the names of the ringers and the number of the bell that each one pulled. The peal consists of eight bells; the tenor is in the key of E flat, and measures 4 ft. 6 in. in diameter, and is calculated to weigh about 28 cwt. The whole peal was originally cast in London by Philip Wightman in the

year 1699; but the second, fifth, and sixth bells were recast in the middle of the eighteenth century, and the treble in 1845. On the tenor may be read the following legend: "Vivos ad coelum, moritu[r]os ad solum pulsata voco." The clock was in great measure reconstructed under Lord Grimthorpe's direction and fitted with his gravity escapement; it strikes the quarter chimes on the second, third, fourth, and seventh bells, and the hours on the tenor. The mechanism of the chimes, which play at three, six, nine, and twelve o'clock, was remade by Mr. Godman, of St. Stephen's parish; this mechanism may be described as a kind of gigantic musical box. A huge cylinder revolves, on which are projecting pegs of brass, which as the cylinder goes round catch against wooden levers which raise clappers that in their fall strike the bells. The same tune is played all through each day, but a different tune is played each day of the week; at the end of the week the barrel is automatically set so as to begin the series of tunes again. There is, moreover, another tune—the Trinity hymn—which can be set by hand, and this is used on the greater festivals.

Besides the peal of eight the sacring bell which once hung near the high altar is now hung in the tower.

It may be well to finish the description of the church with a few notes about the material used and the method of building, abbreviated from a paper by Mr. James Neale. He says that during the restoration many examples were found of lead dowels in the joints of detached shafts. Sinkings were cut in the upper surface of the lower stone and in the lower surface of the upper, so that when in place these sinkings would be opposite to each other; a small hole one-eighth inch in diameter was then bored in the upper stone, through which lead was poured into the sinkings. The mortar used between the outer stones of the fourteenth-century bays of the nave was mixed with oyster-shells, contained a large amount of lime, and was very hard. There is much clunch stone used in the interior and this is in a good state of preservation, but any that has been used externally has decayed. The abaci of the Early English capitals in the main arcade are of Barnack stone, which is harder than clunch and so more suitable for bearing a weight. The Norman stonework was cut with an axe, the Transition with a chisel. The Early English is bolster-tooled; the Decorated ashlar (including the bays on the south side of the nave) is claw-tooled, the mouldings being scraped; the Perpendicular is finely scraped.



SOUTH CHOIR AISLE.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORY OF THE MONASTERY AND SEE.

Although, as stated in Chapter I., Albanus suffered martyrdom in 303 A.D., and a small church was soon afterwards built over his grave, and another of larger size subsequently erected, it was not until the eighth century that the monastery was founded.

The foundation was an act of atonement on the part Offa II., King of the Mercians, in the year 793. In the previous year he had been at the court of Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, and was a suitor for the hand of his daughter. But he treacherously murdered his host and took possession of his kingdom. Either as a politic effort to remove the evil reputation of such deeds, or as a conscientious offering to regain the favour of Heaven by means of a great work for the Church, Offa resolved to found a monastery, in honour of the protomartyr of Britain, upon the site of the martyrdom. The first thing to do was to discover the actual remains of St. Alban. The story of the discovery would not be complete without a vision and a miracle. Accordingly a vision is said to have appeared to the King at Bath, and a miraculous light to have guided him to the spot where the coffin was found. This had been purposely removed from its first resting-place within the walls of the church, for fear of its being desecrated by the Saxons, who certainly did reduce the building almost to a ruin. The coffin was found to contain the body of the martyr, as well as the precious relics which had been placed within it by the Bishop of Auxerre. Their presence establishes the identity of the remains. The church was then repaired so as to be able to preserve safely the reliquary which contained the precious relics "until a more worthy edifice should be built." Permission to build and endow the monastery was obtained from Pope Adrian I., the King making a special journey to Rome in order to procure it. The martyr was canonized at the same time. At some later time a valuable concession was granted to

the new monastery: the tribute known as Peter's Pence being assigned to it, while the lands belonging to the Abbey were exempted from the payment. This grant applied to the whole of Offa's kingdom. The payment of Peter's Pence had only been instituted sixty-six years previously, the object being to maintain a Saxon college at Rome. Offa lived to see the monastery established and partially endowed. He himself gave one of the royal manors to the endowment, but he did not live long enough even to make a beginning of the grand church he appears to have had in contemplation, for he died not long after his return from Rome, some authorities giving the year 794 as the date of his death, others 796.

The monastery was of the Benedictine order. Though it became important, and at last the chief of the Benedictine houses in England, it was not one of the earliest. The Benedictine order had been introduced into England in 596, and forty-five monasteries had been founded before that of St. Alban's. Many of these were little more than cells, and many were afterwards absorbed into the larger establishments. Yet several very famous abbeys were founded at least a century before Offa founded St. Alban's.

Many of the early Abbots of St. Albans were men of mark and of influence in the national councils, and some of them were closely related to the royal family. The Chronicles, however, tell us but little of them, except when the Abbey itself is concerned. Some notes on the Abbots will now be given.

1. **Willegod** (793-796). His rule, we are told, was short but prudent. His death is attributed to vexation at not being able to obtain the body of Offa for burial in the Abbey. He died two months after the King. The chronicler charitably hopes that Offa's name is written in the book of life, although his mortal remains are not honourably preserved. Offa's son and successor, Ecgfrid, confirmed his father's charter and gave another manor to the Abbey.

2. **Eadric.** He was elected in 796, according to the express wishes of the founder, from among the inmates of the monastery. He was of royal blood and had the King's support in some critical difficulties, and ruled with discretion.

3. **Wulsig.** This Abbot, like his predecessor, a monk and akin to the King, scandalized the house by hunting in lay attire, and by entertaining noble ladies within the precincts. He wasted

the substance of the Abbey by bestowing it upon his relations. Most of the property that he had alienated was recovered after his death, and those whom he had fattened died miserably in poverty. It is said that he was much hated by the monks and died of poison.

4. **Wulnoth.** He began well, but after a few years gave himself up to sport habited as a layman. He is said to have ruled eleven years, and to have repented when affected by paralysis, and to have made a happy end. The chronicler adds with sly humour that his change to holiness was brought about "*faciendo de necessitate virtutem.*" In his time the Danes plundered the Abbey of its treasures, vestments and sacred vessels, and carried off the bones of St. Alban to Owense (probably Odense in Funen). The sacrist Egwin was much distressed at the loss of this his greatest treasure, and prayed that he might see the body brought back. St. Alban appeared to him in a vision, and bade him go to Owense and there await instructions. After a year's stay at the monastery he was admitted into the brotherhood and became sacrist, never revealing the fact that he had come from St. Albans. Long did he wait for an opportunity of carrying away the sacred bones, until one winter's night he found means of removing them from the shrine wherein they were kept, and packing them in a chest, which he gave to an English merchant whom he knew, bidding him take it to St. Albans. He said that it contained books which the Abbot had lent him, and which he was now returning; he added that he would shortly bring the key himself, or, if he could not come himself, would send it by a messenger. Together with the chest, which in due course was delivered, a letter was sent detailing the circumstances of his pious fraud; this was read by the Abbot in chapter, to the great joy of the brethren. Egwin shortly after this obtained leave to make a journey to England, and when safely in the Abbey he wrote to the monks at Owense, telling them what he had done. Some of them denounced him as guilty of sacrilege, others justified his action. When he opened the chest in the chapter-house at St. Albans miraculous cures were wrought on many who were infirm, both in the Abbey and in the town.

5. **Eadfrith.** This Abbot was handsome in person, but despicable in his deeds. He never attended the services in the choir. During his time Wulfa, the prior, built an oratory in honour of Germanus on the spot where the rude dwelling he had occu-

pied when visiting St. Albans lay in ruins. After Wulfa's death Eadfrith saw the error of his ways, resigned his office, became a hermit, and died a holy man.

No new Abbot was appointed for a year, as the monks were divided into two parties in favour of rival candidates.

6. **Wulsin.** The bishop after a time intervened and put an end to the dissension, and the monks unanimously elected Wulsin, or Ulsinus. He helped the inhabitants of the town to build the three churches of St. Michael, St. Stephen, and St. Peter (see Appendix). He died holy and full of days.

7. **Ælfric.** This Abbot purchased of King Eadgar a large fishpond which was too near the Abbey to be pleasant; he drained it, leaving only a small pool of water and a bed of reeds, converting the rest of it into gardens. He translated into Saxon some of the historical books of the Old Testament. His doctrine on the Lord's Supper, as expounded in a letter to Wulfstan, Bishop of Sherborne, which is preserved at Exeter, was identical with that of the twenty-eighth Article of Religion. He died "full of days, eminent for sanctity, after having achieved many praiseworthy actions."

8. **Ealdred.** He ruled but for a short time, but was a benefactor to the town. He cleared away much of the ruins of Verulamium, especially those caverns which had become the abode of robbers and outlaws. He also collected materials (chiefly from the Roman ruins)—tiles, stone, and timber—with a view to the rebuilding of the abbey church.

9. **Eadmer.** He was pious, courteous, learned, but he left the monastery much in debt, so that some possessions had to be sold and some timber to be cut down.

10. **Ælfric** is described as of singular and conspicuous merit. He wrote a history of St. Alban, and arranged it for musical recitation. Being afraid of a Danish invasion, and thinking that the relics of the protomartyr, which had already been once carried away to Denmark, would not be safe in the shrine as it stood, he hid them under the altar of St. Nicholas, and at the same time pretended to send them to Ely for safe custody, giving the authorities at Ely to understand that the true relics were being committed to their charge; this, it is said, he did being a prudent and circumspect man, and fearing that the men at Ely would be blinded by covetousness, and refuse to return the true relics if they once got them into their possession. The Danish

invasion was soon over, the King being drowned, and then Ælfric demanded from the monks of Ely the relics he had intrusted to their care. The caution he had exercised was justified by the conduct of the Ely monks; for they, thinking that the bones they had were really those of St. Alban, at first refused to return them, but at last consented to do so. The bones, however, that they sent back were not those they had received. It is plain that these old monks were not always to be trusted to behave in an honourable manner when precious relics were concerned. The chronicler, however, who tells the story, considers the conduct of the monks of St. Albans in sending spurious relics was "pious," while the behaviour of the monks of Ely was "detestable and disgraceful"—but then the chronicler was a monk of St. Albans. Ælfric bought the royal palace of Kingsbury and its land near the Abbey, demolishing the whole of the palace except one tower. Ælfric in 995 was promoted to the office of Archbishop of Canterbury.

11. **Leofric.**[1] This Abbot was half brother to Ælfric. During a great famine he spent large sums in the relief of the poor, devoting to this purpose even some of the treasures that had been got together for the rebuilding of the church, and many gold and silver vessels assigned to his own use in the Abbey. The monks, however, objected to this conversion of the property of the Abbey to uses for which it was not originally intended.

12. **Leofstan.** This Abbot was confessor to King Edward (the Confessor) and his Queen Edith. He acquired much land for the Abbey, and cleared away the woods between London and St. Albans, to make the roads safer for travellers. To secure the good services of a knight as protector of the Abbey he assigned him a certain manor; the service was faithfully performed. The Normans, when they came, dispossessed the holder, and conferred the manor upon Roger, a Norman knight, who, strange to say, fulfilled the conditions on which his predecessor had held the land. At Leofstan's death the Abbey was in a state of the greatest prosperity.

13. **Frithric.** This Abbot was chosen in the reign of Harold

[1] The "Gesta Abbatum" reverses the order of the two Abbots, Ælfric and Leofric, but this is probably wrong. It is recorded that Leofric had the offer of the archbishopric, but declined, saying that his brother Ælfric was far more fit for the post than he, and it is supposed that when Ælfric became Archbishop in 995, Leofric succeeded him as Abbot.

as leader of the southerners against the Normans, just as Aldred, Archbishop of York, was chosen as the leader of the north-countrymen. William accordingly ravaged the possessions of the monastery. After the Conquest, when William was accepted as King, Frithric administered to him the oath that he would keep inviolate all the laws of the realm, which former kings, especially Edward, had established. Needless to say, William soon began to disregard this oath, and despoiled the Abbey of St. Alban's more and more, till Frithric in despair resigned his office as Abbot and retired to Ely, where he soon died. The monks of Ely pretended that he took with him to their monastery the precious relics of St. Alban the Martyr.

14. **Paul of Caen** (1077-1093). A great change now comes over the history of the monastery. The new Abbot was a Norman and a kinsman of Lanfranc, the first Norman Archbishop of Canterbury. Like Lanfranc, who had been Abbot of Caen, he resolved to rebuild his church, and, like Lanfranc, adopted in England the style he had been accustomed to at Caen; but his ideas on the matter of size were far grander than that of his former Abbot, for St. Alban's Abbey Church far surpassed in its dimensions the cathedral church which the new archbishop built at Canterbury. As we have already seen (Chap. I.), he used the Roman bricks from the ruined city of Verulamium as building material. Important as this work was, the account of it occupies but a few lines in the Chronicles. In these it is mentioned that Lanfranc contributed 1,000 marks towards the cost. Paul was an energetic man, as may be seen by the short time occupied in building this large church; but it was not only in providing a new church that he was active, for it is recorded that he reformed the lives and manners of the monks, secured the restoration of land that had been alienated, founded cells as occasion demanded, and persuaded lay donors to give largely to the Abbey tithes, bells, plate, and books. Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, gave the Priory of Tynemouth, which he had founded, to the Abbey of St. Albans. Abbot Paul died on his way home from a visit to this new priory, and was buried magnificently in his own Abbey.

The "Gesta Abbatum" begins at this point to sum up the good and evil deeds of the abbots. Among Paul's shortcomings the following are mentioned: he lost property through negligence; he destroyed the tombs of his English predecessors in the Abbey;

he did not secure as he should have done the bones of Offa for his new church; he alienated the woods of Northame; he bestowed some of the property of the Abbey upon his illiterate kinsfolk. Yet, on the whole, his good deeds outweighed his evil ones. William II., after Paul's death, kept the Abbey in his own hands for four years, using, as was his wont, the revenues for his own advantage. His death in the New Forest was considered by the monks of the Abbey as a special punishment for the extortion he had practised on them.

15. **Richard d'Aubeny** or **d'Albini** (1097-1119). This Abbot, a Norman, was a man of much influence, and during his rule the Abbey was very prosperous. He presented many and valuable ornaments to the church: a shrine wrought in gold for the relics of the apostles, which Germanus had placed in St. Alban's coffin in the fifth century; another shrine of ivory and gilt, for the relics of martyrs and saints; a great number of vestments and many valuable books. During his time, 1104, the relics of St. Cuthbert were translated from the temporary shrine which Bishop Carileph had erected over them to the new Cathedral Church at Durham, and Abbot Richard, as head of Tynemouth Priory, was present on that occasion, and a miracle was worked upon him, for his withered arm was cured by being brought into contact with St. Cuthbert's body. In gratitude for this benefit, he built a chapel in honour of St. Cuthbert in his own Abbey. For some reason the Abbey, though no doubt used, had not hitherto been consecrated. This omission was made good on the festival of the Holy Innocents, 1115, by Geoffrey, Archbishop of Rouen, the Bishops of Lincoln, London, Durham and Salisbury assisting. Henry III., his Queen Matilda, the chief nobles and prelates of the kingdom, were present and stayed at the Abbey from December 27th until the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6th). Wymondham Priory in Norfolk was founded by William, Count of Arundel, and conferred on St. Albans during Abbot Richard's rule. Like his predecessor, he enriched his relations at the expense of the Abbey, and is further blamed by the chronicler for having promised that the Abbey should be subject for the future not to the Archbishop but to the Bishop of Lincoln.[1] This change seems to have led to a stricter rule

[1] The church remained in this diocese until 1845, when it was handed over to Rochester, although, as will be seen afterwards, the Abbey was made independent of the Bishop of Lincoln's jurisdiction.

and so was displeasing to the monks, though it is admitted that the Archbishop had not treated the Abbey well.

16. **Geoffrey of Gorham** (1119-1146). This Abbot came from Maine, where he had been born. He had been invited to take charge of the monastery school, but did not arrive in time, so he opened a school at Dunstable. On one occasion, when a miracle play was being performed by his scholars, he borrowed some vestments of the Abbey; these were unfortunately destroyed in a fire; unable to pay for them, he offered himself as a sacrifice and became a monk. He was unanimously elected Abbot on the death of his predecessor, but at first was reluctant to accept the office, though finally his reluctance was overcome. He made a most energetic ruler. He increased the allowances to the kitchen, cellars, and almonry. He ordered that the revenues of certain rectories should be used for providing ornaments, for a fabric fund, and for the infirmary. He founded and endowed the leper hospital of St. Julian on the London Road, and established the nunnery of Sopwell (see Appendix) for thirteen sisters. He built the guest hall, the infirmary, and its chapel. He also began to construct a new shrine for the relics of the saint, but after spending £60 on it discontinued the work to give himself breathing time, and never went on with it again. He felt himself constrained to sell some of the materials he had collected for this purpose, to obtain money for the relief of the poor during a famine. A long description is preserved of the decoration of the shrine. Among other precious things worked into it was an eagle with outstretched wings, the gift of King Ethelred. Although it was not quite finished, it was sufficiently so as to be ready to receive the bones of the martyr. The remains were examined in the presence of Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, and sundry Abbots in 1129. The genuineness of the relics, so it is said, was established by appearances of the saint to divers persons as well as by miracles. One shoulder blade was missing; but this, as it afterwards appeared, had been given by a former Abbot, at the request of King Canute, to the reigning duke of some foreign land, who had founded a cathedral church on purpose to receive so precious a relic. A long list is given of the valuable gifts this Abbot made to the monastery and church. During his time lived the hermits Roger and Sigur, and the recluse Christina, whose story has been told in Chapter III.

At this time also Henry I. granted to the Abbots the Liberty of St. Albans, which gave them the power of trying minor offences, which had hitherto been tried in the civil courts of the hundred and the shire.

There are only two faults that are recorded of this Abbot: first, he gave some of the Abbey tithe to the support of the church that he had rebuilt; and, secondly, he was too easy in business dealings and allowed himself to be imposed upon.

17. **Randulf of Gobion** (1146-1151). This Abbot had previously been chaplain and treasurer to the Bishop of Lincoln. He erected the Abbot's chamber and other useful buildings, and freed the Abbey from debt. He deposed the Prior because he suspected that a seal he found not yet engraved had been prepared for a new Abbot, and that this indicated a desire on the part of the Prior and monks to depose him. He is said to have burnt a rich chasuble in order to obtain the gold with which it was embroidered, and to have removed the gold plates from the shrine to procure money to make a purchase of land—the rent of which, however, went to the Abbey, not himself—while keeping the gold plate used at his own table. He was allowed to nominate a successor, and then resigned, dying shortly afterwards.

18. **Robert of Gorham** (1151-1166). He was a nephew of Geoffrey of Gorham, sixteenth Abbot. He had been a monk abroad, but coming on a visit to his uncle he obtained permission to "migrate" to St. Albans. In time he became Prior. As Abbot he managed the affairs of the Abbey with prudence. He repaired and releaded the church, whitened it within and without, that is to say, renewed the plaster with which from the first it had probably been covered. Matthew Paris tells us that one Nicholas Breakspear, a clerk from Langley, applied to him for admission to the Abbey, but was refused, as he failed to pass his entrance examination. "Wait, my son," said the Abbot, "and go on with your schooling so as to become more fit." Nicholas is spoken of as a youth, but he must have been about fifty years of age when Robert became Abbot, and was certainly Bishop of Albano within a year or two of that date, and became Pope, under the name of Adrian IV., in 1154, the only Englishman that has ever sat in St. Peter's chair. If there is any truth in the story of his rejection at St. Albans, it must have happened earlier than the abbacy of Robert. King

Stephen visited the Abbey, and Robert obtained his authority to level the remains of the camp, that is, the tower that Ælfric, the tenth Abbot, had allowed to remain standing at Kingsbury, which had become a den of robbers.

Soon after Breakspear had become Pope, Robert and three bishops from the foreign dominions of Henry II. went as envoys to him from the King; the Abbot hoped that the Pope's connection with St. Albans, for his father had become late in life a monk there, would induce him to enlarge its privileges. Knowing that the dignitaries at Rome and the members of the Pope's household were wellnigh insatiable, he distributed valuable gifts among them to secure their good offices with the Pope. Robert complained of the intolerable oppression of the Bishop of Lincoln, and the insolence of his agents, and obtained from Adrian complete exemption from episcopal supervision. The Abbey henceforth was to be subject to Rome alone. When the Pope's letter granting this exemption was exhibited at a council in London, the greatest indignation was expressed. An agreement was, however, at last signed between the Bishop of Lincoln and the Abbot, three bishops intervening in the interest of peace. Abbot Robert then sent two of his nephews, monks, to Rome with still more presents, and as a result of their mission further privileges and liberties were granted to the Abbot; he was, among other things, allowed to wear pontifical robes. The Bishop of Lincoln was exasperated, but did not dare to defy the Pope's authority. Adrian IV. was poisoned in 1158, and the next Pope granted a new and important privilege to St. Albans; what it was is not stated. The Bishop of Lincoln now thought it was time to assert himself. He declared his intention of visiting the Abbey as its Bishop, and ordered that suitable preparations should be made for his reception. The Abbot refused to receive him. He was, on a complaint made by the Bishop, cited before the King's Court and called on to justify his action. After a protracted investigation lasting for three or four years, the King assented to the Abbot's wearing a mitre, and recommended him to buy off further opposition on the part of the Bishop by a grant of certain lands, which were worth £10 a year. At Easter, 1163, Abbot Robert celebrated Mass wearing for the first time mitre, ring, gloves, and sandals. He also at the Council of Tours in the same year took the first seat among the English Abbots, the Abbot of

St. Edmondsbury vainly attempting to take it from him. He gave costly gifts to the church, built the chapter-house and the Locutorium, the Chapel of St. Nicholas, part of the cloister, the long stable, granary, larder, and two solars. He was buried in the new chapter-house, leaving the monastery in debt, caused no doubt by his lavish expenditure in bribery at Rome. On his death in October, 1166, the King kept the abbacy vacant for several months, for at this time the great conflict between the King and the Archbishop, Becket, was raging, and the King wished visibly to assert his authority.

19. **Symeon** (1167-1183). Symeon had been Prior, and therefore had been acting head of the monastery since Robert's death. He was a literary man and an encourager of learning. Being an intimate friend of Thomas Becket, he went to Prince Henry, the King's son, to intercede for the Archbishop and bring about a reconciliation, if possible, with the King; but he was driven from the court with contumely. Symeon finished the shrine. The feretory made by Abbot Geoffrey still contained the bones of the martyr; this was now covered by the work of Abbot Symeon, which was made of large size so as to contain the other. The relics of Amphibalus were discovered about this time at Redbourn, where he had been put to death. The Bishop of Durham dedicated the Chapel of St. Cuthbert which had been built by Richard (fifteenth Abbot). Like several of the other Abbots, Symeon enriched his relations and left the Abbey in debt.

20. **Warren**, or **Warin, of Cambridge** (1183-1195). This Abbot was of low birth, but had risen to the position of Prior. The sacrist alone opposed his election on account of his birth and also because he squinted, and predicted all manner of evils to the monastery if he were elected Abbot. Henry II., soon after the new Abbot had been appointed, and the Bishop of Lincoln happening to be at St. Albans at the same time, the Bishop brought up the old grievance about the Abbey having been made independent of him, but the King silenced him with angry words. Warren founded a leper hospital for women as Geoffrey had founded one for men. This hospital was dissolved by Wolsey in 1526, its revenues going towards the endowment of Christ Church, Oxford. The bones of Amphibalus were removed from the locker in which they were kept, and placed in a new shrine adorned with gold and silver. This Abbot made numerous regulations concerning the domestic affairs of the monastery; one

dealt with the dress, another made better provision for sick monks, another shortened the services, another allowed meat in the infirmary, yet another ordered that all dead monks should be buried in stone coffins, not merely laid in earth graves. This Abbot, in lieu of delivering up the chalice which Richard I. had demanded from all English abbeys wherewith to pay his ransom, sent 200 marks of silver. Shortly before his death he set aside 100 marks to be given to his successor for renewing the west front of the church. Among his faults it is noted that he was self-willed, that he banished to distant cells any of the brethren that offended him, and that he felled timber belonging to the Abbey and sent the proceeds as presents to the King and Queen.

21. **John de Cella** (1195-1214). This Abbot derived his name from the Cell of Wallingford, of which he had been Prior. He was learned, pious, and a good disciplinarian. He left the secular affairs of the Abbey to be managed by the Prior and Cellarer, and devoted himself to his religious duties, and to the fabric. He pulled down the Norman west front with the intention of rebuilding it; he dug foundations, but after he had spent Warren's legacy of 100 marks his walls had not risen above the ground level. His master of the works led him into needless expense, and as progress was so slow the Abbot became dispirited. He, however, got another master of the works and started afresh, assigning to the building fund one sheaf of wheat from every acre. This arrangement lasted during the whole of his rule and for many years afterwards, but progress was still slow. Gifts of gold and silver, considerable sums of money collected by a wandering preacher, who pretended to be Amphibalus, restored to life, were all consumed. At last in weariness of heart the Abbot gave himself to other work; he began to build a new refectory and dormitory, persuading the monks to give up wine for fifteen years, and contribute the money so saved to the cost of the new building. He had a great reputation for sanctity. At times, when he was saying mass, responses were sung, so it is said, by voices not of this world. He limited the number of monks to a hundred. King John ordered him to say mass during the interdict, but he refused, whereupon John seized the monastery and ejected the monks, and only on payment of 600 marks, and afterwards of 500 more, would he restore the Abbey to its rightful owners.

22. **William of Trumpington** (1214-1235). This Abbot was an entirely different style of man from his predecessor. He was much addicted to social enjoyment, was a good man of business, and looked into matters thoroughly for himself; he visited all the cells belonging to the Abbey, and carried on the work of building in an energetic manner. The dormitory was finished, the aisles were roofed with oak, an octagon built on the tower, and, chief of all, the long-delayed work at the west end was resumed and finished. The sacrist, Walter of Colchester, was an excellent carver and carved a handsome pulpit with a great cross thereon, and statues of St. John and the Virgin. The shrine of St. Amphibalus, which had stood to the south of that of St. Alban, was moved to the middle of the nave and inclosed within iron screenwork; much other carving was done in the church and many new altars dedicated. A fine bell was given for services in honour of our Lady; the Chapel of St. Cuthbert with a dormitory over it for seven monks was rebuilt; most of the walls were replastered; cloister walks were built, fitted with oak beams, ceiled and covered with oak shingles. This Abbot acquired much property for the Abbey, but during the civil wars large sums were extorted by either party. In 1235 the church was struck by lightning and set on fire, but fortunately a tank of rainwater was close at hand, and the fire was soon extinguished. As the Abbot died eight days afterwards, the accident was looked upon as a presage of his coming death.

23. **John of Hertford** (1235-1260). He had been sacristan and afterwards prior of the cell at Hertford. The Pope's bull confirming his election required him to present himself at Rome every three years. The church was again struck by lightning, notwithstanding the fact that the impression of the Pope's seal, bearing an image of the Lamb of God, had been duly placed on the top of the tower as a protection against lightning. Abbot John built the guest-house, and devoted the revenues of three rectories to the improvement of the quality of the ale, and for the providing of better entertainment for guests. He repaired many of the buildings belonging to the Abbey, the granary, water mills, houses in London, etc. At the coronation of Henry III. the Abbot of St. Albans took precedence of all the mitred abbots; and though afterwards the Abbot of Westminster obtained precedence, yet in 1536 the signature of Abbot Catton of St. Albans stands first, that of Abbot Benson of Westminster

following, in the list of names attached to the "Articles of Faith" drawn up by Convocation. So it would appear that the Abbots of St. Albans had by this time recovered their rights of precedence. When the see of Lincoln was vacant, the Archbishop proposed to hold an ordination in St. Albans Abbey, but was refused permission. During this Abbot's rule the Pope demanded more than once large sums of money; the Abbot refused to pay, and in consequence of his refusal the church was put under an interdict. At this time lived the celebrated monk Matthew of Paris, to whom we owe much of the knowledge we possess of the history of the Abbey up to his own days. The Chronicles carry us nearly up to the end of Abbot John's rule, Matthew himself dying only a year before the Abbot. For the subsequent history, up to the abbacy of Thomas de la Mare, thirtieth Abbot, we are indebted to Thomas of Walsingham. Matthew was born about 1200, and though of English descent derived his surname from the French capital, either because it was his birthplace, or because he was a student at its university. He became a monk of St. Albans on January 21st, 1217. He went with Abbot John of Hertford to London to be present at the marriage of Henry III. to Eleanor of Provence, 1236; and again he went to Westminster Abbey for the celebration of the feast of the founder, on which occasion he was asked by the King to write an account of the proceedings. He was sent on a mission to the Benedictine monastery at Trondhjem in 1248, attended the royal court at Winchester in 1251, and was present at the marriage of Henry's daughter to the Scottish King, Alexander II. When Henry III. spent a week at St. Albans in 1257, he admitted Matthew to his table and treated him with great confidence, communicating many facts and details of his life to him. Matthew afterwards exerted his influence with the King in behalf of the University of Oxford, when its privileges were in danger from the encroachments of the Bishop of Lincoln. His great work was the "Historia Major." This professes to give the outlines of human history from the Creation up to 1259. The work up to 1189 seems to have been compiled by John de Cella, from 1189 to 1235 by Roger of Wendover. Matthew of Paris transcribed and edited the work of his two predecessors, and continued the history from 1235 to 1259. He shows himself in it a warm advocate of English rights and liberties, and an opponent of papal and regal tyranny. It is the

best early history we have of our own country up to the beginning of the Barons' War, and is also an authority on Continental affairs. He wrote too an abridgement of this work, leaving out the parts dealing with foreign history; this he called "Historia Anglorum." He also wrote "The Lives of the two Offas" and the "Lives of Twenty-three Abbots of St. Albans," whence most of the details of the history of the Abbey given here have been derived. Thomas of Walsingham, who continued the history, lived in the reigns of Henry IV. and Henry V.

Against Abbot John it is alleged that he had his commons sent to his private room, instead of taking his meals with the brethren in the refectory. When he died he was buried with great honour, "as became so great a father."

24. **Roger of Norton** (1260-1290). The new Abbot had been one of the monks; his appointment was confirmed by Pope Urban in 1263. During his rule the monastery flourished, notwithstanding the disturbed state of the country in the early years of it. He acquired many new possessions; the infirmary was rebuilt; the Abbot's lodgings were repaired; many ornaments, vestments, books, a silver thurible, and three new bells were procured. He made regulations for the preservation of the Abbey property, the management of the servants and tenants, and for the careful custody of the Abbey swans. Much litigation took place during his abbacy. Queen Eleanor claimed one of the manors, but was not able to make good her claim. A controversy about the appointment of the Prior of the cell at Wymondham arose between the Abbot and the Countess of Arundel, which was finally settled by an agreement that the Countess should nominate three persons, of whom the Abbot was to select one. Another dispute arose between the Abbot and the townspeople, about grinding corn and fulling cloth. The people claimed the right of having handmills in their houses, the Abbot insisted on his mills being used; the matter was referred to the law courts and decided in the Abbot's favour. Although through negligence some property was lost, yet this Abbot's character was highly commended:

> Hic quem dedit Dominus nobis in rectorem
> Prudenter sustinuit onus et honorem.

He was strict in government, of good life and conversation, eminently religious, distinguished for his learning. He was paralyzed for three years before his death, and when he died his

body was buried before the high altar, but his heart was placed in a small box of Eastern workmanship before one of the altars in the retro-choir.

25. **John of Berkhamstead** (1290-1301). This Abbot was installed on St. Alban's Day, 1291. The King, Edward I., visited the Abbey during the vacancy, and again after the appointment of the new Abbot. The conduct of the King's agent before the election had been very extortionate. The claim of the Warden of Hertford Castle to certain tolls within the Abbot's liberty was the subject of a long investigation; in the end the claim was disallowed. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert of Winchelsea, sent a message that he wished for hospitality in the Abbey, but the Abbot refused to entertain him unless he would sign a paper undertaking that his visit should not in any way prejudice the privileges granted by the Pope, the Abbey being stated to belong "ad Romanam Ecclesiam, nullo medio." The Archbishop declined to sign this document, and so had to put up with lodgings outside the Abbey precincts. When he arrived the bells of St. Stephen's Church were not rung in his honour, whereupon the Archbishop put the church under an interdict; but the clergy paid no attention to this, and conducted the services as usual. During his rule the body of Queen Eleanor rested at St. Albans, and one of the Eleanor crosses was erected and remained here until 1702, when it was destroyed. A drinking fountain now occupies its site. In 1302 the Abbot obtained from Edward I. a confirmation of all the grants that had been made to the Abbey by former kings. This Abbot does not receive a very good character from the chronicler: he cut down and sold too much timber, granted too many pensions, and deprived several of the priors of the cells without sufficient cause.

26. **John de Marinis** (1302-1308). This Abbot had been Cellarer, and afterwards Prior, for fourteen years, before his election as Abbot. The full list of the fees and expenses connected with his confirmation at Rome is given. The sum was enormous: 2,500 marks and 400 shillings.

He offended Edward II. by refusing to supply some carriages and horses which the King had demanded, and so when Edward came to St. Albans he refused to see the Abbot. The latter tried to appease the King by a present made through the notorious favourite Piers Gaveston, and also by a grant of the manor of Westwood, which was beyond his power to give, but all to no

purpose. Most of the records of his rule relate to rights of property and regulations respecting the monks. As his end approached he made a statement of his liabilities. He owed £1,300 and had never paid the 1,000 marks due to the King at the last vacancy. We are told that he was constant, not given to much talk, honest in his life, religious, and circumspect.

27. **Hugh of Eversden** (1308-1326). This Abbot, who had been Cellarer for five years, is described as being tall and handsome, able to speak French and English well, but with little knowledge of Latin. On this account he wished to avoid going to Rome, and sent his proctors instead to obtain the Pope's confirmation of his election—but they, having incurred much expense, returned to say that the Pope insisted on the new Abbot appearing at Rome in person. By liberal presents he made a favourable impression at Rome, but the journey, beyond the payments of first-fruits, cost him more than £1,000. With the help of a legacy from Reginald of St. Albans he finished the Lady Chapel and the retro-choir, in which he placed the shrine of St. Amphibalus. King Edward II. paid a second visit to the Abbey, and on being told by the Abbot of the benefactions of Edward I. gave 100 marks and much timber towards the work then in progress. The Abbot was twice besieged in his Abbey by the townspeople; they desired to be answerable to the King and not the Abbot. They gained their point, though they were compelled to surrender to the next Abbot the privileges they had obtained of Abbot Hugh. It was during the rule of this Abbot that the piers in the main arcade of the nave gave way while mass was being said on St. Paulinus' Day, 1323, and he had to begin repairing this part of the church.

28. **Richard of Wallingford** (1326-1334). He was of humble birth; his father was a blacksmith. After taking his degree at Oxford he became a monk, and resided at St. Albans for three years, when he again went to Oxford and studied philosophy and theology there for nine years. He was on a visit to St. Albans at the time of the death of Abbot Hugh. He was elected Abbot, but the election was found to be informal, so he resigned his claim to the Pope, who thereupon appointed him Abbot. He wrote a Register of things done in his time, compiled a book of Decretals and Constitutions of Provincial Chapters, and sundry works on geometry and

astronomy. He constructed a clock showing the courses of the sun and moon, the ebb and flow of the tides, etc., which Leland, Librarian to Henry VIII., speaks of as still going in his day. He also made an astronomical instrument to which he gave the name "Albion," and wrote a book describing the manner of using it. Edward III., visiting the Abbey and seeing the clock being constructed, while the damage done by the fall of the nave piers in his predecessor's time had not been fully repaired, remonstrated with the Abbot, who replied that anyone could repair the church, but few could construct a clock such as he was making.

It is said that he suffered from leprosy and that his death was hastened by the shock caused by a terrible thunderstorm on St. Andrew's Eve, 1334, which set some of the domestic buildings on fire. The fire was put out before much damage was done, but the Abbot died.

29. **Michael of Mentmore** (1335-1349). He was a graduate of Oxford, a monk of St. Albans, and had been appointed Master of the Schools. He finished the repairs to the south arcading and south aisle begun by Abbot Hugh, built three altars, and vaulted the aisle. He baptized in 1341 Edmund of Langley, fifth son of Edward III., from whom the House of York was descended. Philippa, the Queen, went to the Abbey to be churched and gave the Abbey a cloth of gold. The Abbot, the Prior, the sub-prior and forty-seven monks fell victims to the terrible plague known as the Black Death, which was ravaging the country in 1349. He is described as being pious, patient, and meek like Moses.

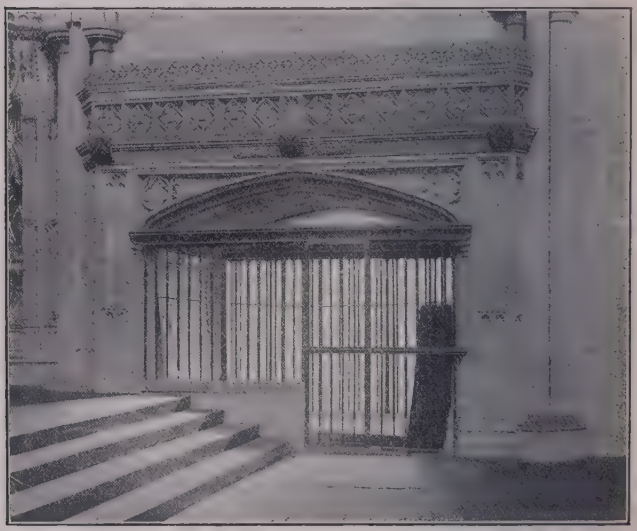
30. **Thomas de la Mare** (1349-1396). He was a man of high birth, and was connected with many people of importance, among them probably Sir Peter de la Mare, the first Speaker of the House of Commons. He became a monk at St. Albans, and was sent to Wymondham, recalled to St. Albans, and afterwards became kitchener, cellarer, and then Prior at Tynemouth in Northumberland. When Abbot Michael died the Prior of Wymondham was elected, but declined the abbacy, whereupon Thomas de la Mare was elected. One of the proctors who started with him to Rome died on the way of the Black Death. The new Abbot himself, after his appointment had been confirmed, was taken seriously ill at Rome, but recovered with great suddenness. He was a great favourite with Edward III., and

it is said that King John of France, who was taken prisoner at Poictiers in 1356, was for a time committed to his charge; he treated John with great moderation and respect, and King John afterwards showed his appreciation of his treatment by releasing some St. Albans men who were prisoners of war in France, bidding them tell the Abbot that they owed their release to him. The Abbot was strict in correcting faults, curbing excesses, cutting away abuses, and putting things right; he was revered by all, feared by many. He was appointed by the King as visitor to numerous monasteries, and in 1351 was President of a general chapter of Benedictines. Moreover his knowledge of painting was such that Edward III. appointed him master of the painters assigned for the works to be executed at the chapel of the Palace of Westminster, and the ornamental painting and glazing of St. Stephen's Chapel was carried on for several years under his supervision. After having been Abbot for some years he wished to resign, but Edward III. would not hear of it. In the time of Richard II. an attack was made by the followers of Wat Tyler on the Abbey. They succeeded in extorting certain charters from the Abbot, but after the collapse of the rebellion the King himself came to the Abbey and stayed there for eight days, summoning all the commons of the county to make oath to do suit and service to the Abbot and the convent in the customary manner. He rebuilt the Great Gate of the Abbey (see Appendix). He died on September 15th, 1396, having been Abbot for forty-seven years, a longer period than any of his predecessors or successors. He was buried before the high altar and a brass to his memory may now be seen in the Wheathampstead chantry.

31. **John de la Moote** (1396-1401). He had held several offices in the Abbey before his election as Abbot, and when Cellarer had been put in the pillory in Luton Market, "in hatred to the Abbot and utter contempt of religion." The conspiracy to dethrone Richard II. was first formed at the dinner table of this Abbot, when the Duke of Gloucester and the Prior of Westminster were dining with him. In 1399 the body of John of Gaunt rested in the Abbey on its way to London, his son, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Lincoln, being allowed to conduct a service in the Abbey; and in the same year Richard II. and Henry, Duke of Lancaster, lodged at St. Albans. On arrival in London Richard II. was dethroned, and the Bishop of Carlisle, who

took his side, was seized by order of the Duke of Lancaster, soon to be known as Henry IV., and carried as a prisoner to St. Albans; he was, however, afterwards pardoned by Henry. A dispute for precedence between this Abbot and the Abbot of Westminster occurred. John died in 1401.

32. **William Heyworth** (1401-1420). This Abbot was pro-



JOHN OF WHEATHAMPSTEAD'S CHANTRY.

moted to the see of Lichfield in 1420, died in 1446 or 1447, and was buried in St. Alban's Abbey.

33. **John of Wheathampstead** (1420-1440 and 1451-1464). The Abbot's surname was Bostock, and it is supposed, as on his mother's grave in Wheathampstead Church a shield bearing the Heyworth arms is found, that John was a kinsman of his predecessor. To increase the revenue he admitted many gentlemen and ladies of high rank to the confraternity; this admission was a mere honour, conferring indeed the right to vote in the chapter, but not imposing any duties or monastic restrictions

on those thus admitted. Among the names of those admitted in 1423 we find those of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and Jaqueline his wife, whom he subsequently divorced; in 1431 his new wife, Eleanor, was admitted. John procured by royal grant lands in various quarters, and also, in order that he might secure himself against any charges which might be made against him, a pardon for diverse offences, of none of which was he in all probability guilty—treason, murder, rape, rebellion, conspiracy, etc. A strange light is thrown by this upon monkish morals of the day; one would have thought no abbot would ever have been supposed possible of committing such offences. These were disturbed times, for the King, Henry VI., was imbecile and various nobles were intriguing against each other for power. The star of Humphrey of Gloucester, the Abbot's friend, was setting, and other troubles threatened the nation, so Abbot John resigned in 1440.

34. **John Stokes** (1440-1451). This Abbot ruled for eleven years, and then either died or resigned. During his rule Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, was tried for witchcraft, was imprisoned in the Tower, and did penance in the streets of London. Her husband died, or more probably was murdered, in 1447, and was buried in the Abbey on the south side of St. Alban's shrine.

33. In 1451 Abbot John of Wheathampstead, though over eighty years of age, was re-elected. Soon after his election he gave his church a "pair of organs," surpassing all others in England in size, tone, and workmanship.

In 1455 the Wars of the Roses began with the first battle of St. Albans (May 23rd), fought to the east of the town. In this the White Rose party were victorious; the King was taken prisoner and lodged for the night in the Abbey. The victorious army plundered the town, but the Abbot by sending out plenty of wine and food saved his monastery.

In 1459 King Henry was again at the Abbey and spent Easter there, ordering his best robe to be given to the Prior when he left.

Another battle was fought, this time to the north of the town, on February 17th, 1461. Henry was at this time in the hands of the Yorkists and at St. Albans. The Queen, having defeated and slain the Duke of York at Wakefield, marched southward at the head of an undisciplined horde of 18,000 men—Scotch,

Irish, Welsh, and English—to rescue her husband. The Earl of Warwick at first drove the Queen's troops out of St. Peter's Street to Barnard's Heath with great slaughter, but, owing to treachery on the part of one of the Yorkist leaders, the fortunes of the day changed, and Margaret drove Warwick before her towards the town. He, however, rallied his forces and retreated in good order to London, though he had to leave Henry behind him. The royal party went to the Abbey, where they were enthusiastically received by the monks, who chanted thanksgivings for the victory; they were led to the high altar and to the shrine of St. Alban. But the victorious troops, being little better than barbarians, flushed with unexpected victory, committed fearful excesses in the town, and even plundered the Abbey. Hitherto Abbot John had been a strong partisan of the Lancastrians, but the treatment he received turned him into a staunch Yorkist. Edward IV. when he came to the throne granted the Abbot the right to hear and try all causes, even treason, with full power of sentencing to death. The Abbots continued to exercise these powers till 1533. In 1462 the Abbot presented a petition to the King, setting forth the impoverished state of the Abbey; this led to further powers being granted to the Abbot. Wheathampstead had been ordained in 1382 and, according to canon law, must have been twenty-five years of age, so he must have been over a hundred and five when he died in 1463. He, as we have seen (Chap. I.), made many changes for the worse in the fabric of the church; the character of the work was partly due to the time in which he lived, for the age of great architecture was over, and partly to lack of funds.

35. **William Alban** (1464-1476).

36. **William of Wallingford** (1476-1484). This Abbot's name will be remembered because the high altar screen was his work, and is generally called Wallingford's screen. It is said that his management of the revenues of the Abbey was prudent, and that he was energetic in defending his rights; but it would seem that he was not equally energetic in repressing irregularities within its walls. During the interregnum that followed his tenure of office things went on from bad to worse, so that the Archbishop sent a monition to the Abbey reciting a bull which had been sent to him as legate. This bull directed the Archbishop to visit all the larger monasteries in which he had reason to suspect that evil practices prevailed, and the Archbishop threatens

to visit St. Albans because he has heard of cases of simony, usury, lavish expenditure, and immorality. He says unless within sixty days things are reduced to order, not only in the monastery but also in the nunneries of Pré and Sopwell and other cells, he will visit personally or by commission to inquire into matters and set things in order. The Abbot died in 1484, but his successor was not appointed until 1492.

37. **Thomas Ramryge** (1492-). No details of events during the rule of this Abbot exist, nor is the date of his death known.

38. **Thomas Wolsey** (1521-1529). This great cardinal was invested with the temporalities on December 7th, 1521, and held the Abbey "in commendam." There is no record of his ever having resided in the Abbey, but he probably put a stop to the printing which had been carried on in the Abbey from 1480 onwards. He also made a gift of plate to the Abbey. He held the office of Abbot until his disgrace in 1529.

39. **Robert Catton** (1530-1538). This Abbot was really appointed by Henry VIII., but was nominally elected by the chapter. He had been Prior of Norwich. The Abbey printing press was again in use in his time. He seems to have been deprived during his lifetime, for what reason we cannot say.

40. **Robert Boreman of Stevenage** (1538-1539). This Abbot was a nominee of the King, and was chosen by him because Henry knew that he would be willing to surrender the Abbey. This he did on December 5th, 1539. It was part of the policy of Henry VIII. to make it appear that the monasteries were *voluntarily* surrendered by the abbot and chapter, and it was generally made worth their while to do so by a liberal pension. In some cases the abbots refused, among them the last Abbot of Glastonbury, who paid dearly for his refusal, as he was hanged on a hill commanding a view of the possessions of the Abbey, which not being his to part with he had refused to surrender, though, of course, the nominal charge against him was not the real one. Abbot Boreman, however, made no objection, and received a yearly pension of £266 13*s.* 4*d.*, so was a rich man for the rest of his days. Pensions of varying amounts were given to his monks. Boreman and twenty of the monks were in receipt of them when Mary came to the throne. Mary wished to revive the Abbey and put Boreman over it, but did not live to carry out her intended plan.

The monastic buildings very rapidly disappeared; the church became parochial, and has been served by the following sixteen rectors:

George Wetherhall, appointed	1553.
Archdeacon William East.	
Archdeacon James Dugdale,	1556.
Edward Edgeworth,	1578.
Roger Williams,	1582.
John Brown.	
Archdeacon Edward Carter,	1662.
Archdeacon John Cole,	1687.
Archdeacon John Cole (II.),	1713.
Benjamin Preedy,	1754.
Joseph Spooner,	1779.
John Payler Nicholson,	1796.
Henry Small,	1817.
Henry J. B. Nicholson,	1835.
Sir John C. Hawkins, Bart.,	1866.
Archdeacon Walter John Lawrance,[1]	1868.

The Church of St. Albans was in the diocese of Lincoln until 1845, when it was handed over to Rochester. In 1877 Parliament passed a bill for the division of the populous diocese of Rochester into two parts; the northern to be called the see of St. Albans, the southern to retain the name of Rochester. The Right Rev. Dr. Claughton, then Bishop of Rochester, elected to take the northern division of his old diocese and became Bishop of St. Albans. He was succeeded in 1890 by John Wogan Festing, D.D., who died in 1903.

Both of these bishops are buried in the churchyard on the north side of the nave. On Dr. Festing's death the Right Rev. Edgar Jacob, D.D., was translated to St. Albans from the diocese of Newcastle, and was enthroned in May, 1903.

The Church of St. Albans, although legally a cathedral church, yet differs in certain particulars from most of the other churches of this rank in England. It is also used as a parish church, of which the Dean is rector. He has the same powers, responsibilities, and duties as the rector of any other parish. It is sometimes said that the nave is the parish, and the part eastward of

[1] Dean since July, 1900.

the rood screen the cathedral church, but it is not so. The Dean as rector has power over the whole, and parishioners have right of access to every part of the building, just as in any other parish church; and the Dean as their rector can be called upon to baptize, marry, visit, and bury the people under his charge. Churchwardens are also appointed and have their statutory rights. There are some honorary canons, but as yet no "canons residentiary," nor are there "priests vicars" (or "minor canons"), lay vicars, or choristers on the foundation. The choir is a voluntary one, the clergy under the Dean are curates.

The two parts of the church that are ordinarily in use are the Lady Chapel, where morning and evening prayer is said daily on week-days, and the nave, which is used for the Sunday services. There is at present no high altar in place under the great screen, but one will probably be placed there as soon as the final touches are put by Mr. Gilbert to the carved work of the reredos. The choir proper is not, however, capable of holding a large congregation. It was, of course, originally intended to hold the monks only. The part eastward of the stalls might on special occasions, such as the enthronement of a bishop, the installation of a dean, be temporarily fitted with chairs, but it is not likely that any permanent seats will be placed here, since as a matter of fact the nave and Lady Chapel answer all ordinary requirements.

OLD FLOOR TILE.

THE GREAT GATE.

CHAPTER V.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

The Great Gatehouse.—In the days of its prosperity the Abbey was surrounded by a wall within which, as was usually the case, were placed all the buildings that were necessary for monastic life: cloister, dormitory, refectory, kitchen, chapter-house, infirmary, guest-house, stables, dovecote, granary, garden, orchard, vineyard, lodgings for the abbot, prior, cellarer, cook, and servants, fish-house, fish-ponds, as well as cemeteries for dead brethren. A number of gatehouses gave access to this inclosure: the Great Gate, which alone remains standing; the Wax-house Gate, where the tapers used for burning before the shrines were made: the Water-gate, St. Germain's gate, and others. The chief of these was the Great Gate to the west of the Abbey Church. It was built in the time of Thomas de la Mare about 1365, on the site of a previously existing gatehouse which had been destroyed by a violent gale a few years earlier. It was not only a gateway, but a prison wherein offending monks, and also

laymen of the town, over which the Abbot had civic jurisdiction, were imprisoned. The Gatehouse was stormed by rioters in the time of Wat Tyler's rebellion, the monks in their terror giving wine and beer to their assailants, but news arriving of Wat Tyler's death, the rioters dispersed; the ringleaders were tried and condemned to death, among them John Ball, who, with his seventeen condemned companions, passed the time between their trial and execution in the dungeons beneath the Gatehouse. In 1480 a printing press was set up in this gatehouse; after the dissolution it was used as the borough gaol. During the Napoleonic wars some French prisoners were confined within the walls. In 1868 the Gatehouse was found too small for use as a gaol, and a new prison was built near the Midland Station. The Gatehouse was bought by the governors of the grammar school, and in 1870 the school was removed from the Lady Chapel to the Gatehouse. There are dungeons beneath the level of the roadway; over the archway is the large room where the sessions used to be held, with other rooms on either side. In this building some old chimney-pieces may still be seen. Although the present foundation dates from the reign of Edward VI., yet a school had existed in St. Albans from very early time. Some think it was founded by Ulsinus. Be this as it may, it is certain that Geoffrey de Gorham, who was afterwards Abbot (1119-1146), first came to England during the time of Richard of Albini (the fifteenth Abbot), with a view of being master of the school. In 1195 we read that the school had more scholars than any other in England. The school in these early days stood to the north of the Great Gate on the other side of the street that runs down the hill on the north side of the triangular graveyard known as Romelands, where a Protestant martyr, one George Tankerfield, a cook, born in York, but living in London, was burnt on August 26th, 1555, during the reign of Mary I.

Sopwell Nunnery.—There are a few remains of Sopwell Nunnery in a field near the river Ver, to the south-east of the city. They may be reached by taking the first turning to the right hand after crossing the bridge on the way from the city down Holywell Hill. This nunnery was founded by Geoffrey of Gorham, sixteenth Abbot, about the middle of the twelfth century. Two women, pious and ascetic, had taken up their abode on this spot in a hut which they built for themselves, and Geoffrey determined to build them a more permanent dwelling, and make

them the nucleus of a religious house. They accepted the Benedictine Rule, and gradually the nunnery increased in size, and many ladies of high birth took the veil here. One of the abbesses wrote the "Boke of St. Albans," not, as might be imagined, an account of the saint or of the religious house, but a treatise on hawking, hunting, and fishing. It was printed in 1483 at the St. Albans printing press. When the nunnery was dissolved, Sir Richard Lee, to whom the Abbey lands were granted, turned it into a dwelling-house for himself. The ruins consist of ivy-clad walls of brick and flint, pierced by square-headed windows, but containing few interesting features.

The name is said to have been derived from the fact that the two women mentioned above soaked or sopped their dry bread in water drawn from the Holy Well or some well in the immediate neighbourhood of their hut.

St. Peter's Church.—This church, standing at no great distance from the cathedral, may be reached by taking the footway called the Cloisters, crossing High Street, passing between the Clock Tower and the picturesque and ancient inn, the Fleur de Lys, and through the quaint street of gabled houses known as French Row, into St. Peter's Street.

The church was originally built about 948 A.D., by Ulsinus, the sixth Abbot of St. Albans, but none of his work remains. It seems to have been almost entirely rebuilt at the end of the fifteenth century, and most of it is Perpendicular in character. It has a central tower rebuilt about a hundred years ago, and until that time had a transept. There is a clerestory on either side of the nave. The chancel and the west end with its circular window show signs of Lord Grimthorpe's style of restoration. The tower contains a fine peal of ten bells. In the windows of the south aisle is some richly coloured modern Belgian glass by Capronnier; in the windows of the north aisle are some fragments of fourteenth or fifteenth century glass, including the arms of Edmund, the fifth son of Edward III., from whom in the male line Edward IV. was descended, though he also traced his descent and his claim to the throne from Lionel, the third son, through his daughter Philippa.

In the churchyard, which is of considerable extent, many of those who fell in the two battles of St. Albans were buried.

St. Michael's Church.—St. Michael's Church is further from the cathedral than St. Peter's. To reach it one must go

westward from the Clock Tower, along High Street and its continuations, down the hill past Romelands, where, as we have seen, George Tankerfield, condemned by Bishop Bonner as a Protestant heretic, was burnt at the stake. At last a bridge over the Ver is reached, and, turning round to the left after crossing it, we see St. Michael's Church before us. It has within the last ten years lost its Saxon tower, a new one with no pretention to beauty, pierced by two pentagonal windows in the third stage, having been built on a slightly different foundation. It stands within the area once inclosed by the walls of Verulamium, and Sir Gilbert Scott conjectured that it was originally the Basilica of the Roman city altered for Christian worship; but probably, though it may stand on the same site, it is of more recent date, though still of great age. Like the cathedral, its walls are built of Roman brick and flint. The plan is irregular: there is a nave and chancel, a large south aisle, or rather chantry, the eastern gable of which is of half-timber construction, below which are two tall round-headed windows far apart, with a small circular opening between them; the western gable has an opening with louvre boards. The tower projects from the north aisle, its western wall being flush with the west end of the nave; on the outside in the south wall of

MONUMENT OF LORD BACON.

"*Sic sedebat.*"

the chancel is a canopied niche over a flat slab a few inches above the level of the ground. The south door, within a porch, has a pointed top beneath a wide, round-headed arch springing from imposts. The arcading of the nave was formed by cutting arches through what probably were at one time the outside walls of the church; two of these on the south side open into the chapel. The carved oak pulpit of early seventeenth-century work, with its sounding-board and iron frame for the hour-glass, demands attention; but the chief attraction of the church for many is the alabaster statue of Francis Bacon, which is placed in a niche in the north wall of the chancel. He wished to be buried in this church, as his mother was already buried there, and moreover it was the parish church of his house at Gorhambury, and the only Christian church within the walls of ancient Verulam, from which he took one of his titles.

St. Stephen's Church.—There are two ways of getting to this church: either by following the road that runs south from St. Michael's, and after reaching the top of the hill turning sharply to the left; or by going from the centre of the city down Holywell Hill and straight on, past the London and North-Western Railway Station, up St. Stephen's Hill. The church spire is a conspicuous landmark. The churchyard is exceedingly pretty, and the church most interesting. It was originally built in the tenth century by Abbot Ulsinus, rebuilt in the time of Henry I., restored in the fifteenth, and again by Sir Gilbert Scott in the nineteenth century. The south porch is of timber; under it is a square-headed doorway; to the east of it is a chapel once called "the Leper's Chapel," but probably a chantry, now used as a vestry. There is a small aisle on the south side. The spire is a broach and stands at the west end. On the north side of the nave is a wide, blocked-up, round-headed arch; through the blocking wall a pointed doorway was cut, but this is also now blocked up. There is a door of Perpendicular style, with a square-headed label terminated by heads much weathered, in the west wall of the tower. The walls of this church are of the usual materials, flint and Roman brick.

The lectern is of brass, and bears round its foot the inscription "Georgius Creichtoun Episcopus Dunkeldensis." There were two Scotch bishops of this name; both lived in the sixteenth century. How the lectern reached St. Albans no one knows for certain, but it may possibly have been part of the plunder

carried off by Sir Richard Lee from Scotland. It was hidden for safety in a grave at the time of the civil wars, but was found again in 1748 when the vault was opened.

THE OLD ROUND HOUSE, "THE FIGHTING COCKS."

The Clock Tower.—This is a most conspicuous object in the city, standing near the market-place, almost due north of the Lady Chapel. It was built at the beginning of the fifteenth

century in order that the curfew bell might be hung in it. This had been cast some seventy years before the building of the tower, and had hung in the central tower of the Abbey Church; it weighs about a ton. It bears the inscription: "Missi de coelis, habeo nomen Gabrielis." The tower was restored under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott in 1865, and in the process has lost most of the interest it possessed.

The Old Round House.—This curious old house, also known as "The Fighting Cocks," stands near the river at the bottom of the roadway that leads down from the town through the Great Gate, and probably occupies the position of the Abbey gate that was known as St. Germain's Gate. There is little doubt that the foundations of this house date back to the time of the monastery, and may have been the foundations of the gateway. The cellars, it is said, appear to have an opening into some subterranean way. The name of "Fighting Cocks" no doubt indicates that after the dissolution of the monastery a cockpit existed here. It is said that it was at St. Germain's Gate-house that the monks kept their fishing tackle, rods and nets. A claim is made for this building, that it is the oldest inhabited house in England, a claim that many other buildings may well dispute.

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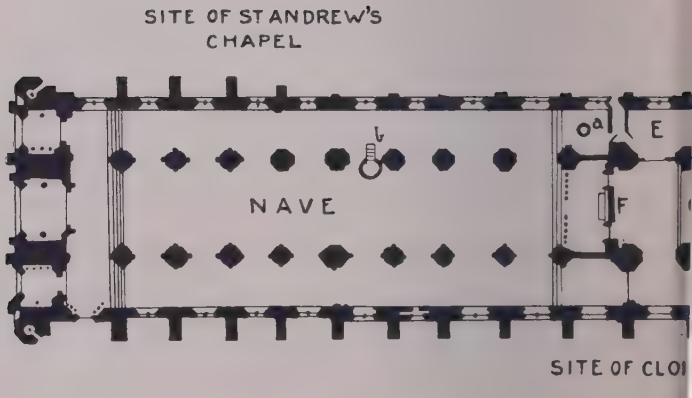
DIMENSIONS OF THE CATHEDRAL.[1]

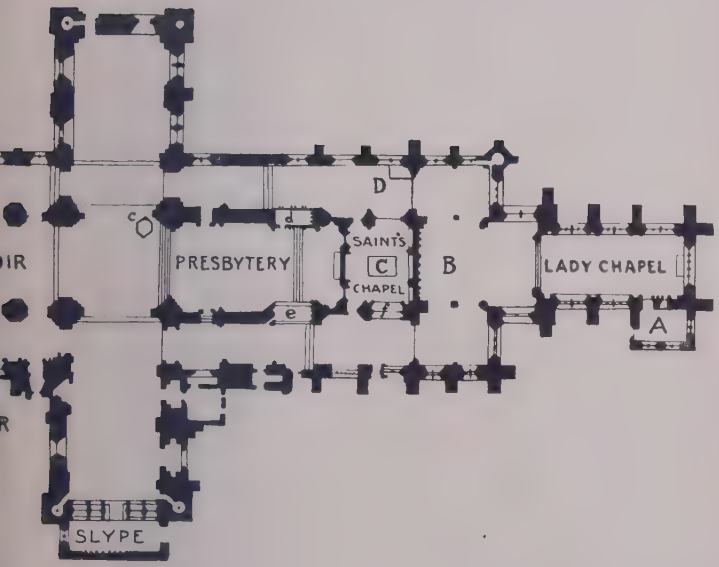
Total length, external	550 ft.
„ „ internal	520 ft.
Length of high roofs	425 ft.
„ of nave from west door to screen	205 ft.
„ of choir and presbytery	169 ft.
„ of Lady Chapel	57 ft.
„ of transept, interior	177 ft.
Width of nave with aisles	75 ft. 4 in.
„ „ without aisles, between piers	29 ft. 6 in. to 31 ft. 6 in.
„ of presbytery	75 ft. to 78 ft.
„ of west front, exterior	105 ft.
„ of transept, interior	32 ft. to 33 ft. 6 in.
„ „ exterior	54 ft. 4 in.
„ of Lady Chapel, interior	24 ft.
Diameter of tower piers, east and west	16 ft.
Distance between tower piers each way	24 ft.
Height of tower piers	43 ft.
„ „ arches	55 ft.
„ of tower	144 ft.
Width of tower, east and west, exterior	47 ft.
„ „ north and south, exterior	45 ft.
Height of nave ceiling (from floor)	66 ft. 4 in.
„ of ridge of high roofs	96 ft.
„ of Lady Chapel vault	33 ft.
Total internal area (about)	39,240 sq. ft.
Height of floor above mean sea-level	340 ft.

[1] These are the dimensions given by Lord Grimthorpe; the altitudes, except when otherwise stated, are measured from the level of the floor at the west doorways.



a Font.
b Pulpit.
c ,,
d Ramryge Chantry.
e Wheathampstead Chantry.
f Duke Humphrey's ,,

GROUND-PLAN OF
ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL.



A Chapel of the Transfiguration.
B Retro-choir.
C Shrine of St. Alban.
D ,, St. Amphibalus.
E Vestry.
F Wallingford Screen.

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TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

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